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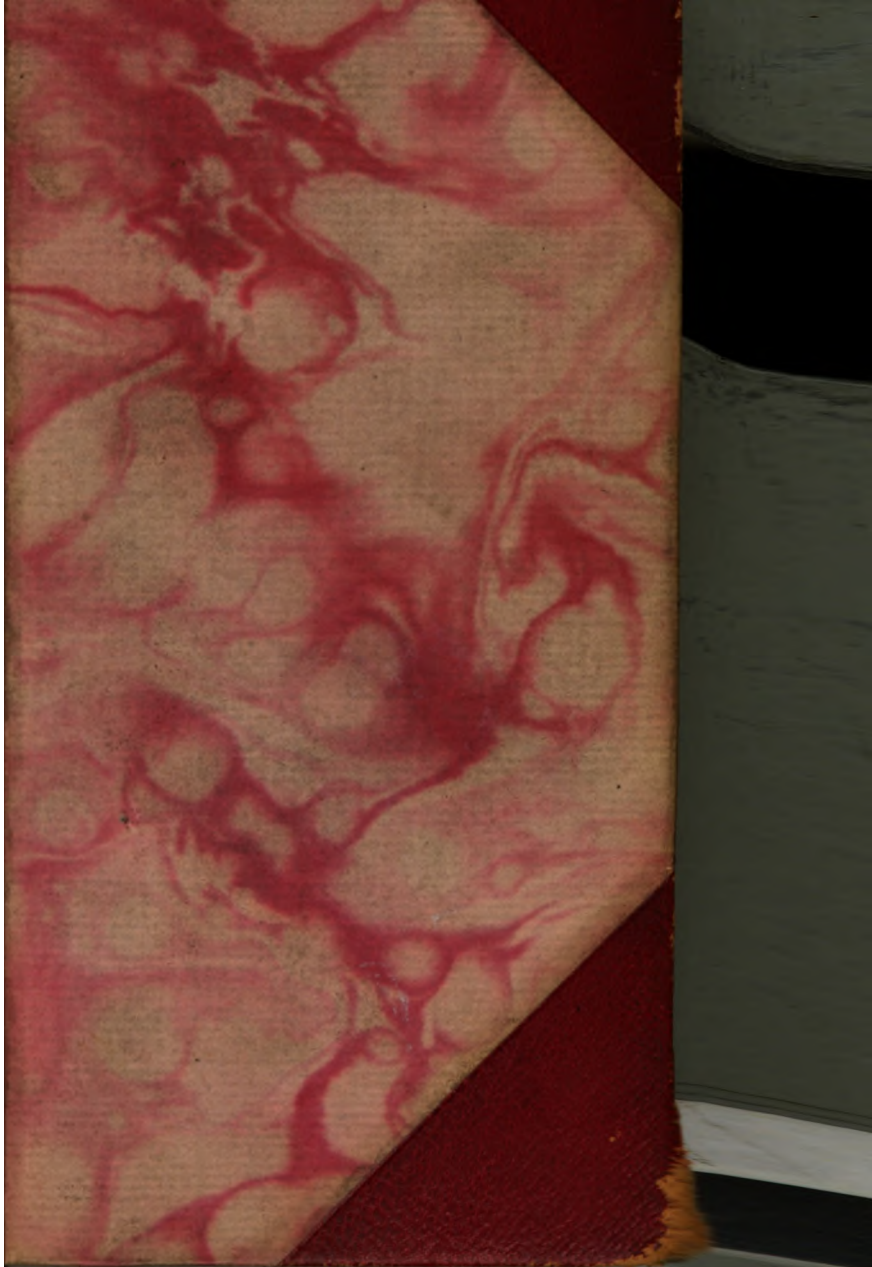
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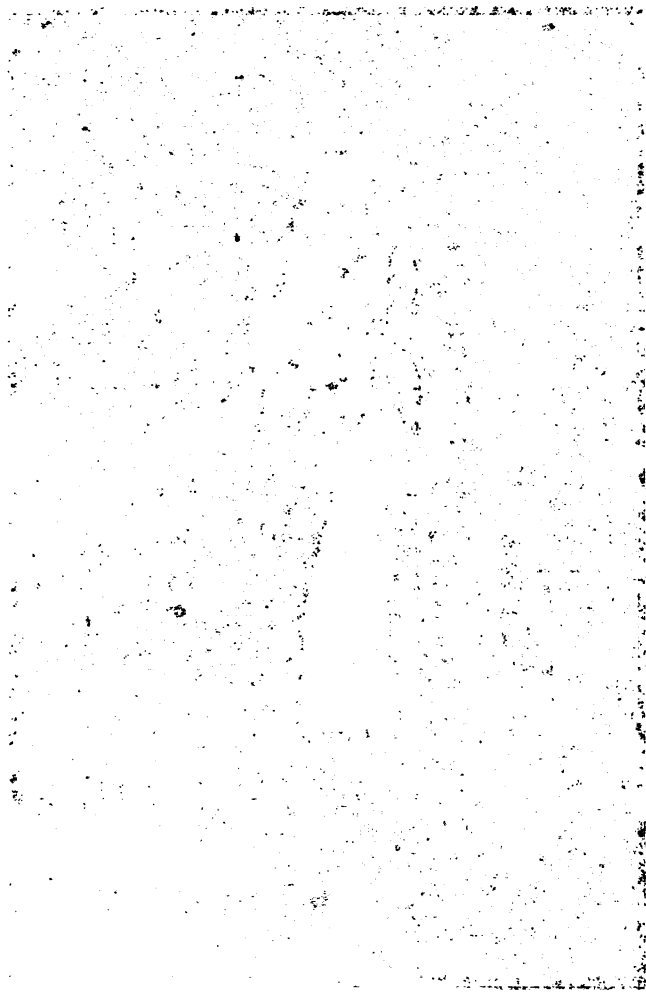
L. GERARD

A. HUBER

*Napoleon Bonaparte*







THE LIFE  
OF  
NAPOLEON BONAPARTE,  
BY  
W. HAZLITT.  
VOL. II.



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BY  
WILLIAM HAZLITT.

*Second Edition,*  
REVISED BY HIS SON.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

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THE  
LIFE OF NAPOLEON.

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CHAPTER XIII.

TREATIES OF LEOBEN AND CAMPO-FORMIO.

The Archduke Charles takes the command of the armies in Italy; Napoleon's plan for the campaign is thwarted by the Directory; first movement of the armies; Napoleon's proclamation to his soldiers; battle of Tagliamento; obstinate contest at Tarwis; the Archduke in person defeated by Massena; farther success of the French; Gradisca and Trieste taken; the army passes the Drave into Germany; successful movements of Joubert; he rejoins Napoleon; alarm felt at Vienna; Napoleon's plans again defeated by the Directory; makes an overture for a negotiation to Prince Charles; his reply; battle of Nieumarkt; suspension of hostilities; preliminary treaty of Leoben; Venice, Ferrara, Bologna, and Romagna ceded to the Republic; offers said to be made to Napoleon to quit the service of the Republic; commencement of Hoche's career; enters Germany at the head of the army of the Sambre and Meuse; drives the Austrians before him; hostilities suspended; quiet of the court of Montebello; ratification of the preliminaries exchanged at Leoben; new question of etiquette; Clarke, the French plenipotentiary; sketch of his character; negotiations for a definite treaty; Napoleon the only diplomatist on the part of France; vacillating conduct of the Directory; Napoleon's military fame creates him enemies among the republicans at home; definitive treaty issued at Campo Formio; its stipulations; General Desaix with the army of Italy; sudden death of Hoche; Augereau succeeds him in the command of the armies of the Sambre and Meuse, and of the Rhine; Buonaparte returns to Milan; on his way to Germany visits Turin; his enthusiastic reception at Geneva; meeting of the congress of Rastadt.

THE Archduke Charles, who had lately acquired the highest renown in Germany, took the command of the Austrian armies of Italy, and advanced his headquarters to Inspruck on the 6th of February, 1798,



whence he soon transferred them successively to Villach and Goritz. In the course of February his engineers visited the passes of the Julian and Noric Alps. They planned fortifications, which they were to construct as soon as the snow melted. Napoleon was impatient to anticipate them, and ardently hoped to attack the Archduke and chase him out of Italy before the arrival of a body of 40,000 men, whom the Aulic Council (feeling secure on that side) had detached from the armies of the Rhine, and who were marching through Germany to reinforce him.

Napoleon's army was composed of eight divisions of infantry and a reserve of cavalry, consisting of 53,000 infantry, 3000 artillerymen, serving 120 guns, and 5000 cavalry. The King of Sardinia was to have furnished a contingent of 10,000 troops; but the Directory, by refusing to ratify the armistice of Bologna, deprived the French General of this resource; and the Venetians, with whom he had been in treaty for a similar aid, showed so hostile a disposition that he was obliged to leave 10,000 men in reserve on the Adige to watch their motions. He had also hoped that the armies of the Sambre and Meuse and of the Rhine would have been united in one army of 120,000 men; and proceeding from Strasburg through Bavaria would have joined the army of Italy, which, crossing the Tagliamento and the Julian Alps, would direct its march on the Simering, and both together, forming a body of near 200,000 men, enter Vienna, while an army of observation of 60,000 men defended Holland and blockaded Ehrenbreitstein and the fortresses on the Rhine. But the Directory had no such thoughts in their head, and persisted, in spite of the experience of the last campaign, either from narrowness of mind or a mean jealousy, in keeping the armies separate.

There are three high roads from Italy to Vienna; the first, through the Tyrol by Trent, the pass of the Brenner, Saltzburg, and the Danube; the second, by Treviso, the Tagliamento, the Carnic Alps, Carinthia,

and the Simering; the third, through Carniola, Styria, and Gratz, joins the Carinthian road at Bruck. The Tyrolese communicates with the Carinthian road by five cross roads, and the Carinthian with that of Carniola by three.

In the beginning of March, the Archduke's army was 50,000 strong; it was behind the Piave, covering Friuli, except 15,000, who were in the Tyrol. This army was to be joined in the course of April by the six divisions on their march from Germany, which would make it upwards of 90,000 men. So great a superiority of numbers justified the sanguine hopes of the cabinet of Vienna. The French army at the same period was stationed as follows: three divisions, amounting to 17,000 men, were in the Tyrol under Joubert; Massena's, Augereau's, and Bernadotte's divisions, with General Dugua's division of cavalry, were in junction in the Bassanese and Trevisan countries, having advanced posts along the right bank of the Piave; Victor was still in the Apennines, but was expected to reach the Adige in the beginning of April with a *corps d'armée* and reinforcements, amounting to 20,000 men. When it was found that the Archduke had arrived at Inspruck on the 6th of February, it was concluded that he would collect his chief forces in the Tyrol, by which means the detachments from the Rhine would have been enabled to join the army twenty days earlier. Joubert received orders on this conjecture to take up some strong position and keep the enemy in check as long as he could, so as to give time to the other divisions to take the Archduke's army in flank by the gorges of the Brenta. But the Archduke, adhering to the plan laid down for him by the Aulic Council, threw himself into the Friuli, at a distance from his reinforcements, and thus gave the French General an opportunity of attacking him before the arrival of the divisions of the Rhine, which were still twenty days' march behind. Napoleon in consequence fixed his head-quarters at Bassano on the 9th of March, whence

he addressed the following order of the day to the army: "Soldiers! the taking of Mantua has now put an end to the war of Italy, and given you lasting claims to the gratitude of your country. You have been victorious in fourteen pitched battles and seventy actions: you have taken 100,000 prisoners, 500 field-pieces, 2000 heavy cannon, and four pontoon-trains. The contributions laid on the countries you have conquered have fed, maintained, and paid the army; besides which, you have sent thirty millions to the Minister of Finance for the use of the public treasury. You have enriched the Museum at Paris with three hundred masterpieces of the arts of ancient and modern Italy which it required thirty centuries to produce. You have conquered the finest countries in Europe. The Transpadan and Cispadan Republics are indebted to you for their existence. The French flag waves for the first time on the shores of the Adriatic, opposite the native country of Alexander, and within twenty-four hours' sail of it. The Kings of Sardinia and Naples, the Pope and the Duke of Parma are separated from the Coalition. You have expelled the English from Leghorn, Genoa, and Corsica. Yet higher destinies await you: you will prove yourselves worthy of them! Of all the foes who conspired to stifle the Republic in its birth, the Emperor alone remains before you. He has now no other policy or will than those of that perfidious cabinet, which, unacquainted with the horrors of war, smiles with satisfaction at the woes of the Continent. The Executive Directory has spared no effort to give peace to Europe; and the moderation of its proposals was uninfluenced by the strength of its armies. It has not been listened to at Vienna: there is therefore no hope of obtaining peace but by seeking it in the heart of the Hereditary States. You will there find a brave people. You will respect their religion and manners, and protect their property. It is liberty that you carry to the brave Hungarian nation!"

It was necessary to pass the Piave and the Taglia-

mento in the presence of the Austrian army, and to turn its right, in order to anticipate it at the gorges of Ponteba. Massena marched from Bassano, passed the Piave in the mountains, beat Lusignan's division, taking him prisoner, and drove the wreck of his troops beyond the Tagliamento, taking Feltre, Cadore, and Belluno. Serrurier marched in the morning of the 12th of March on Conegliano, where the Austrian head-quarters were; and by this diversion enabled Gueux's division to effect the passage of the Piave in the afternoon at Ospedaletto before Treviso. The river is deep here, but the eagerness of the soldiers disregarded every difficulty. A drummer was the only person in danger, who was saved by a woman that swam after him. Bernadotte with his division coming from Padua, joined the head-quarters at Conegliano on the following day. The enemy had chosen the plains of the Tagliamento for his field of battle, which were favourable to his excellent and numerous cavalry. On the 16th, at nine o'clock in the morning, the two armies met near Valvasone on the two banks of the river, the French being drawn up on the right bank, and the Austrian army, in nearly equal force, on the opposite side. This position of the Archduke did not cover the Ponteba road, which was left open to Massena. Perhaps the Archduke thought that a division of grenadiers on its march from the Rhine, and which had reached Klagenfurth, would be in time to reinforce Ocskay's division and to oppose Massena.

The cannonade began from one bank of the Tagliamento to the other; the light cavalry making several attempts to pass the stream. But the French troops, seeing the enemy so well prepared, ceased firing, set up the bivouacs, and prepared their mess. The Archduke, deceived by this appearance, thought, as they had marched all night, they were taking up a position. He fell back, and returned into his camp. Two hours afterwards, when all was quiet, the French soldiers suddenly got under arms. Duphot, at the

head of the 27th light demi-brigade, being Guyeux's van, and Murat with the 15th light demi-brigade, Bernadotte's van, each supported by its division, each regiment with its second battalion deployed, and its first and third in column by divisions at platoon distance, rushed into the river. The enemy flew to arms; but the whole of this first line had already passed in the finest order, and was drawn up in line of battle on the left bank. The cannonade and musketry began in all directions. General Dugua's division of cavalry of reserve and Serrurier's division formed the second line, and passed the river as soon as the first line had advanced two hundred yards from the shore. After some hours' fighting, and several charges of infantry and cavalry, the enemy having been repulsed in the attacks on the villages of Gradisca and Codroipo, and finding themselves turned in a successful charge made by Dugua's division, beat a retreat, abandoning eight pieces of cannon and some prisoners to the victors.

In the meanwhile, Massena had effected his passage at San Danieli. He met with little resistance, and occupied Osopo, the key of the Ponteba road, which the enemy had neglected. He was thus master of the gorges of the Ponteba, and forced the remains of Ocskay's division to retreat on Tarwis. The Archduke being now unable to retreat by way of Carinthia, because Massena occupied Ponteba, resolved to regain that road by Udine, Cividale, Caporetto, and Tarwis. Marching with the rest of his army by Palma-Nuova and Gradisca, he sent forward three divisions and his parks under General Bayalitsch in that direction; but Massena was only two days' march from the pass of Tarwis, and Bayalitsch was six. The Archduke soon perceived the danger in which the latter was, hastened in person to Klagenfurth on the other side of the Alps, placing himself at the head of the division of grenadiers which he found just arrived there, and returned to take up a position before Tarwis to oppose Massena's

progress. Massena, who had pushed forward after some delay, found the Archduke's forces formed in a line, consisting of the remains of Ocskay's troops and the fine division of grenadiers from the Rhine. The action was obstinate, the importance of victory being felt on both sides. The Austrians knew that if Massena made himself master of the pass of Tarwis, the three Austrian divisions on their march through the valley of the Isonzo were lost. The Prince exposed himself to the greatest dangers, and was repeatedly on the point of being taken by the French skirmishers. General Brune behaved on this occasion with distinguished bravery. The Austrians were at length broken, but not till they had engaged their very last battalion in the action. They could operate no retreat, but the remains of their force made for Villach beyond the Drave, in order to rally there. Massena being in possession of Tarwis waited there for the approach of the divisions which had been ordered to take this route from the field of battle of the Tagliamento.

The day after this battle, the Austrian head-quarters had entered Palma-Nuova, a fortress belonging to the Venetians, but quitted it immediately. The French, who were in their rear, left a garrison there. Bernadotte's division appeared before Gradisca, intending to pass the Isonzo, but found the gates shut, and the governor refused a parley. This general attempted to take the place by assault and lost upwards of 400 men, an imprudence for which the only excuse was the eagerness of the troops of the Sambre and Meuse to distinguish themselves and enter Gradisca before the old troops of the army of Italy. The General-in-Chief had at the same time proceeded with Serrurier's division to the left bank of the Isonzo by the Montefalcone road. There not being time to construct a bridge, Colonel Andreossy threw himself in first to sound the depth, and the soldiers followed his example up to the middle in the water, under a brisk fire of two battalions of Croats. As soon as the governor of Gradisca perceived Ser-

ruier on the heights overlooking the town, he surrendered a prisoner of war, with 3000 men, two standards, and twenty field-pieces with their teams. Head-quarters were at Goritz the next day. Bernadotte's division marched on Laybach. General Dugua with 1000 horse took possession of Trieste, where the English merchandise was confiscated, and quicksilver to the value of several millions of francs was found in the Imperial warehouses from the mine of Idria. Serrurier marched from Goritz up the Isonzo through Caporetto and the Austrian Chiusa to support General Guyeux, who had followed Bayalitsch's divisions, and had greatly annoyed his rear. On his reaching Chiusa di Pieta, the Austrians thought themselves safe; for they did not know that Massena had been two days in possession of Tarwis. They were attacked in front by Massena and in the rear by Guyeux. The position of Chiusa, though strong, could not withstand the 4th of the line, called the *Impetuous*. This demi-brigade climbed the mountain that commands the left, and thus turning this important post, left Bayalitsch no resource but to lay down his arms. His baggage, guns, and colours were all taken. The prisoners, however, did not amount to more than 5000, as great numbers of soldiers, natives of Carniola and Croatia, had disbanded themselves in the passes when they found all was lost, and endeavoured to reach their respective villages.

Head-quarters were successively fixed at Caporetto, Tarwis, Villach, and Klagenfurth. The army passed the Drave over Villach bridge, which the enemy had not time to burn. It was now in the valley of the Drave in Germany, having passed the Carnic and Julian Alps. The language, manners, climate, soil, and state of cultivation were all different from those of Italy. The soldiers were pleased with the hospitality and simplicity of the peasants. The abundance of vegetables and quantities of waggons and horses were also very useful. In Italy there were only carts drawn by oxen, whose slow and clumsy pace did not

suit the vivacity and impatience of the French. The army occupied the castles of Goritz, Trieste, and Laybach. The two divisions from the Rhine under Kaim and Mercantin, which had now reached Klagenfurth, endeavoured to defend that place, but were repulsed with loss. Klagenfurth was surrounded with a bastioned wall, which had for ages been neglected. The engineer-officers filled the ditches with water, repaired the parapets, demolished the houses built on the ramparts, and established hospitals and magazines of every kind in the place. As a *point d'appui*, at the entrance of the mountains, it seemed to be important. A proclamation was distributed here in French, German, and Italian, addressed to the inhabitants of Carinthia, Carniola, and Istria, laying the blame of the war on English gold and the treachery of the Austrian cabinet, and offering them the goodwill and protection of the General-in-Chief, which had some effect in calming the minds of the people.

Ten days had elapsed since the opening of the campaign in Friuli, while in the Tyrol both armies had remained inactive. The Austrian general Kerpen was hourly expecting the arrival of the two divisions from the Rhine: Joubert on his part had received no orders to attack, but only to keep the enemy in check on the Avisio. But immediately after the battle of the Tagliamento, when Napoleon had resolved to penetrate by the Carinthian road with his whole army into Germany, he dispatched orders to General Joubert to beat the enemy, to whom he was superior, drive him beyond the Brenner, and then march by facing to the right by the Pusterthal along the road that runs by the side of the Drave to join the army at Spital in Carinthia. Buonaparte ordered him to leave a brigade to defend the Avisio, and to fall back in case of need on Montebaldo; though he knew that when the French army should arrive victorious on the Simering, menacing Vienna, all that might occur in the Lower Tyrol would be of secondary importance. General Joubert executed these orders with prompti-



tude and ability. On the 20th of March, he commenced his movement. He passed the Avisio at Segonzano, while Delmas and Baraguay d'Hilliers passed it over Lavis bridge, and directing their march in concert toward St. Michael attacked General Kerpen, and routed him with the loss of half his men, while Landon's corps, separated from him by the Adige, stood idly looking on. Joubert then advanced directly on Nieu-marckt, took that place after some resistance, and passing the bridge defeated and dispersed the troops under General Landon, who could not make a stand against him. Bolzano, a rich trading town, full of stores, fell into the hands of the French. In the mean time, the first Austrian division of the Rhine under General Sporck had reached Clausen. Kerpen rallied the remains of his corps in the rear of this division; and stationed in a position which he deemed impregnable, waited for the victor. The obstacles presented by the nature of the ground were indeed immense; but the heroism and intrepidity of the French troops prevailed over them. Kerpen now retreated on Mittenwald, thus leaving the Pusterthal road leading into Carinthia open to Joubert; but he did not choose to avail himself of it with the enemy so close in his rear. He therefore followed him, and in an action on the 28th of March, in which a charge of cavalry by General Dumas contributed greatly to the success of the day, defeated him for the third time, and forced him to evacuate Sterzing, and retreat on the Brenner. The alarm spread to Inspruck, as it was thought he was marching on that place to effect his junction with the army of the Rhine; a step that would have been sufficiently fatal. But there being now no obstacle to prevent him from fulfilling his orders, he began his march by the Pusterthal road, calling in all his posts from the Tyrol, except a reserve of 1200; and shortly after joined the General-in-Chief with 12,000 men. Thus in less than twenty days the Archduke's army had been defeated in two pitched battles and several actions, and driven

beyond the Brenner, the Julian Alps, and the Isonzo: Trieste and Fiume, the only two sea-ports of the monarchy, were in possession of the enemy. The French head-quarters were in Germany, not more than sixty leagues from Vienna. Everything seemed to indicate that in the course of May the victorious armies would be in possession of that capital; for Austria had not above 80,000 men left, while the French armies of the Sambre and Meuse and of the Rhine amounted alone to above 130,000 men.

The news of these events succeeding each other, struck the inhabitants of Vienna with dismay. The capital was menaced, and was destitute of all effectual means of resistance. The most valuable effects and important papers were packed up. The Danube was covered with boats, which were transporting goods into Hungary, whither also the young Archdukes and Archduchesses were sent. Among these was the Archduchess Maria Louisa, then five years and a half old. The people complained that the ministry did not think of making peace, though they had no means of stopping the progress of the French arms. The armies of the Rhine and Moselle and of the Sambre and Meuse were by agreement to have opened the campaign, and passed the Rhine on the same day that the army of Italy passed the Piave; and were to advance as speedily as possible into Germany. When Napoleon sent home an account of the battle of the Tagliamento, he announced that he should pass the Julian Alps in a few days, and enter the heart of Germany; that between the 1st and 10th of April he should be at Klagenfurth, the capital of Carinthia, that is to say, within sixty leagues of Vienna; and before the 20th of April, on the top of the Simering, twenty-five leagues from Vienna: that it was therefore of importance that the armies of the Rhine should put themselves in motion, and that he should be apprised of their march. The Government on the 23rd of March wrote to him in answer, complimenting him on the victory of the Tagliamento, stating reasons

why the armies of the Rhine had not taken the field, and assuring him that they would march forthwith; when, three days after, the ministers wrote to say that Moreau's army could not take the field, that it was in want of boats to effect the passage of the Rhine, and that the army of Italy was not to reckon on the co-operation of the armies of Germany, but on itself alone. These dispatches, which reached Klagenfurth on the 31st of March, gave rise to many conjectures. Was the Directory apprehensive that these three armies, comprising all the forces of the Republic, might, if united under one commander, render him too powerful? Were they intimidated by the reverses which the army of the Rhine had suffered the year before? Was this strange pusillanimity to be ascribed to a want of vigour and resolution in the generals? That was impossible. Or was there an intention to sacrifice the army of Italy, as had been attempted in June 1796, by sending one-half of it against Naples? It is not wonderful that Buonaparte, in ruminating over his disappointment, should have formed designs of getting rid of this knot of drivellers and marplots, who would not do anything themselves nor let others, and who prejudiced the public cause, out of a mean jealousy that it might redound to the credit or influence of those who were capable of advancing it in the noblest manner. It is so far the misfortune of republican institutions, that those who are placed at the head of them cannot repose on mere external dignity, independently of merit or services; and are therefore more disposed to look with jaundiced eyes on talents or exertions that eclipse their own, and to which, of course, they ought in justice to yield the precedence. An hereditary pre-eminence, not founded on worth or capacity, cannot be supposed to be jealous of it, or to suffer in the comparison with pretensions that are quite foreign to its own. The danger on this side is not from a spirit of rivalry of popular pretensions, but from a total ignorance and contempt for them! As Napoleon could no longer calculate on the assistance

of these two armies, he was obliged to relinquish all thoughts of making his entrance into Vienna ; he had not sufficient cavalry to descend into the plain of the Danube ; but he thought he might safely advance to the summit of the Simering, and that the most advantageous use he could make of his present position was to conclude a peace, which was the general wish of all France.

Within twelve hours from the receipt of the dispatches of the Directory, Buonaparte wrote to Prince Charles in these terms : " While brave soldiers carry on war, they wish for peace. Has not this war already lasted six years ? Have we not killed men enough, and inflicted sufficient sufferings on the human race ? Humanity calls loudly upon us. Europe has laid down the arms she took up against the French Republic. Your nation alone perseveres ; yet blood is to flow more copiously than ever. Fatal omens attend the opening of this campaign. But whatever be its issue, we shall kill some thousands of men on both sides ; and after all we must come to an understanding, since all things have an end, not excepting vindictive passions. The Executive Directory of the French Republic communicated to his Majesty the Emperor its wish to put an end to the war which afflicts both nations. The intervention of the court of London defeated this measure. Is there no hope of arrangement ? And must we, on account of the passions and interests of a people which is a stranger to the horrors of the war, continue to slaughter each other ? You, General, whose birth places you so near the throne, and above those petty passions which often actuate ministers and governments, are you disposed to merit the title of a benefactor to the whole human race, and the saviour of Germany ? Do not imagine, sir, that I mean to deny that it may be possible to save Germany by force of arms ; but even supposing the chances of war should become favourable to you, the country would nevertheless be ravaged. For my part, General, if the overture I have the honour to

make to you should only save the life of a single man, I should feel more proud of the civic crown I should think I thereby merited than of all the melancholy glory that the most distinguished military successes can afford."

On the 2nd of April, Prince Charles replied as follows:—"Most certainly, General, whilst I carry on war in obedience to the call of honour and duty, I am desirous, as you are, of peace, for the sake of the people and of humanity. Nevertheless, as it does not belong to me in the functions with which I am intrusted, to inquire into or terminate the quarrel of the belligerent nations, and as I am not furnished with any powers to treat on the part of his Majesty the Emperor, you will not consider it extraordinary that I do not enter into any negotiation with you, and that I wait for superior orders on this important subject, which is not essentially within my province. But whatever may be the future chances of war, or whatever hopes of peace may exist, I beg you to rest convinced, General, of my esteem and particular consideration."

In order to second this overture for negotiation, it was important to march forward and approach Vienna. On the 1st of April, at break of day, Massena advanced on Freisach. In front of the castle he met with the enemy's rearguard; he attacked them briskly, and entered the town pell-mell with them, continuing the pursuit almost as far as Nieumarckt, where he found the Archduke with four battalions from the Rhine, and the remains of his old armies, drawn up to defend the gorges of Nieumarckt. The General-in-Chief immediately ordered Massena, with all his division, to join on the left of the high road: placed Guyeux's division on the heights to the right, and Serrurier's in reserve. At three in the afternoon, the second light infantry charged the enemy's first line, and performed wonders. These troops came from the Rhine, and had been called in contempt the *contingent*, in allusion to the troops furnished by the

German princes, which were supposed to be none of the best. Piqued by this appellation, they challenged the old soldiers of the army of Italy to go as fast and as far as they did. Prince Charles on this occasion exposed himself to the greatest personal danger, but in vain; he was driven from all his positions, and lost 3000 men. At night the French troops entered Nieumarckt. Scheiffing was still twelve leagues off, where, it was hoped by the Archduke, General Kerpen might join by the third cross-road leading from the Tyrol; and to gain time, he proposed a suspension of arms for twenty-four hours, but Berthier replied that they might fight and negotiate at the same time. Napoleon sent forward strong reconnoitring parties, and went in person to meet Kerpen; but that corps had fallen back, and its rearguard under Sporck was only slightly harassed. On the 4th and 5th the head-quarters remained at Scheiffing, a castle situated on the banks of the Muer. From Scheiffing to Knittenfeld the road runs along the Muer, through formidable defiles. Positions which might have stopped the French army were to be found at every step. On the 3rd the van had a furious engagement with the enemy in the defiles of Unzmarkt. The loss of the Austrians was considerable; Colonel Carrère, a distinguished and brave officer commanding the artillery of the French vanguard, was killed; his death was much regretted. One of the frigates taken at Venice was named after him; and it was one of those with which Napoleon sailed from Egypt, when he returned to France and landed at Frejus.

After the action at Unzmarkt, the army met with no further resistance, and reached Leoben on the 7th. Lieutenant-General Bellegarde, the Archduke's Adjutant, and Major-General Merfeld presented themselves at this place under a flag of truce, with a note from the Emperor offering a suspension of arms to treat for a definitive peace. Napoleon the same day gave answer, that though a suspension of arms was wholly prejudicial to the French army, yet as a step towards

that desirable object he was willing to agree to it. The armistice was accordingly signed in the evening of the 7th, and was to last five days. The whole country, as far as the Simering, was to be occupied by the French. Gratz, one of the largest towns of the Austrian monarchy, was surrendered with its citadel. General Berthier, at dinner, asked the Austrian commissioners where they supposed Bernadotte's division to be? "About Laybach," was the reply. "And Joubert's?" "Between Brixen and Mulbach." "No," answered he; "they are all in echelons; the most distant is only a day's march behind." At this they were much surprised. General Leclerc, an intrepid officer and skilful negotiator, was sent to Paris to acquaint the government with the signature of the armistice.

The French General-in-Chief had sent his aide-de-camp Lavalette at the head of a party of cavalry from Klagenfurth on the 30th of March, to meet General Joubert, who was still detained in the Tyrol. Lavalette proceeded as far as Lienz, where the town's-people, perceiving that the French were but sixty men, took up arms against them, and the detachment was with difficulty saved by the coolness and intrepidity of its commander; one dragoon only was assassinated. The inhabitants were afterwards punished for this violence. On the 8th of April, Joubert arrived at Spital, near Villach, so as to form the left of the army. He had his prisoners, which were very numerous, immediately removed into the rear. Bernadotte, having received orders to join the army at Leoben, left General Friand with a column of 1500 men to cover Fiume and keep Carniola in awe. On the 6th of April this column was attacked by a body of 6000 Croats, and was obliged to fall back on Matera near Trieste. This event, exaggerated like those which had occurred in the Tyrol, was eagerly caught hold of at Venice, and was one chief cause of the hostility and commotions which produced the downfall of that state. The armistice expired on the 13th; but at nine in the morning Count Merfeld,

accompanied by the Marquis de Gallo, ambassador from Naples to Vienna, arrived with full powers to negotiate and sign preliminaries of peace. A farther armistice was concluded till the 20th. On the 16th three plans were agreed upon and sent to Vienna; and the next day, the answer of the cabinet of Vienna was brought by Baron Vincent, the Emperor's aide-de-camp. General Clarke had been furnished with full powers on the part of the French government, but he was then at Turin. As it required time for him to reach head-quarters, Napoleon took the responsibility upon himself, and signed the treaty. General Clarke arrived a few days after. The Austrian plenipotentiaries had set down as the first article that the Emperor acknowledged the French Republic. "Strike that out," said Napoleon: "the Republic is like the sun, which shines by its own light; none but the blind can fail to see it." Buonaparte gives as a politic reason for what appears only a natural burst of romantic enthusiasm, that in case the French people had afterwards wished to establish a monarchy, the Emperor might have objected that he had only acknowledged the Republic. This was prying narrowly into futurity for difficulties, and looks too much like a deep-laid scheme to extinguish that light which was said to shine so bright. It was stipulated by the preliminaries that the definitive treaty should be settled at Berne, and the peace of the Empire referred to another Congress to be held in a German city. The limits of the Rhine were guaranteed to France. The Oglio was to divide the States of the house of Austria in Italy from the Cisalpine Republic. Mantua was to be restored to the Emperor, while the Republic gained Venice with the legations of Ferrara, Bologna, and Romagna annexed to it, as a compensation for the loss of its possessions on the Terra Firma. By this arrangement the French armies communicated with Venice by Milan, and could at any time take possession of it when it suited their convenience. This blow was suspended over Venice in retaliation of the



spirit which had just broken out there, and of the murders committed in the rear of the army, of which accounts had been transmitted by General Kilmaine. An insurrectionary cockade was displayed at Venice, and the English minister wore it in triumph, having also the Lion of St. Mark on his gondola.

On the 27th of April, the Marquis de Gallo presented the preliminaries, ratified by the Emperor, to the French General-in-Chief at Gratz. While waiting for the ratification of the Executive Directory, several overtures were made by the Emperor's plenipotentiaries, and the aide-de-camp Lemarrois carried the answers to Vienna. He was well received; and this was the first time that the tri-coloured cockade had been seen in that capital. It was in a conference at Gratz that one of the plenipotentiaries, authorised by an autograph letter of the Emperor, is said to have offered Napoleon, on the conclusion of a peace, a sovereignty of 150,000 souls for himself and family in Germany, in order to place him beyond the reach of republican ingratitude. The General smiled, and having desired the plenipotentiary to thank the Emperor for this proof of the interest he took in his welfare, said he wished for no greatness or wealth unless conferred on him by the French people, adding—"And with that support, believe me, sir, my ambition will be satisfied."\* Adjutant-General Desolles was dispatched to Paris with the news of the opening of the negotiations; and Massena, who had contributed so much to it by the share he had in almost every victory, carried the preliminary treaty of peace to the Directory.

Hoche had just been promoted to the command of the army of the Sambre and Meuse. He was a young

\* The Commander of Este, brother to the Duke of Modena, wanted to purchase the friendship of the French General by placing four chests, containing a million of francs each, at his disposal. "Not for four millions," replied Napoleon, "will I put myself in the power of the Commander of Este." The Venetians tried the same thing.

man full of talent, bravery, and ambition; he had an army of 80,000 men under his command, and his heart swelled with impatience at the news of every victory that arrived from the army of Italy. He importuned the Directory to allow him to enter Germany. On the 18th of April he passed the Rhine at the bridge of Neuwied, whilst Championnet, who had marched from Dusseldorf, reached Uckerath and Altenkirchen. Kray commanded the Austrian army. Hoche attacked him at Heddersdorf, took a great number of prisoners, and forced him to fall back on the Maine. On the 22nd, he arrived before Frankfort, when General Kray's staff transmitted to him dispatches from Berthier, informing him of the signature of the treaty of Leoben, and he immediately concluded an armistice. Moreau was at Paris, soliciting the paltry sum of 30,000 or 40,000 crowns to pay for pontoons to pass the Rhine at Strasburg; but as soon as Desaix, who commanded the army of the Rhine in his absence, learned that Hoche was engaged with the enemy, he constructed a bridge on the 20th at the village of Kilstett, several leagues below Strasburg. On the 21st, at two in the morning, the army passed the Rhine. Moreau, who had posted with all possible speed from Paris, found himself at the head of the army, just as Starray, who had collected 20,000 men and twenty pieces of cannon, was attacking it. The Austrians were routed, and left a number of prisoners and their cannon in the power of the conquerors. Among other booty taken was Kinglin's waggon, containing Pichegru's correspondence with the Prince of Condé, which Moreau kept secret for four months without communicating it to the Government. After this victory, the army marched up the Rhine, and took Kehl. The van had proceeded beyond Offenbach in the valley of the Kintzig, when a courier arriving from Leoben, Moreau put a stop to hostilities, and concluded an armistice with Starray. Thus the zeal and efforts of the armies were rendered fruitless. But the war was conducted on a bad system, without

energy or concert. By one of the clauses of the Constitution of the year 3, the treasury was made independent of the Government—an error which was alone sufficient to endanger the existence of the Republic.

During the months of May and June, the French head-quarters were fixed at Montebello, a castle situated a few leagues from Milan on a hill which commanded a view of the whole plain of Lombardy. The daily assemblage here of the principal ladies of Milan to pay their court to Josephine, the wife of the General-in-Chief; the presence of the ministers of Austria, the Pope, the Kings of Naples and Sardinia, the Republics of Genoa and Venice, the Duke of Parma, the Swiss Cantons, and of several of the German Princes; the attendance of all the generals, of the authorities of the Cisalpine Republic, and the deputies of the towns; the great number of couriers going and returning every hour to and from Paris, Rome, Naples, Vienna, Florence, Venice, Turin, and Genoa, and the style of living at this fine castle, induced the Italians to call it the *Court of Montebello*. The mind takes pleasure in reverting to this short period of gaiety and romance, followed by such mighty achievements and such sad reverses. It was in fact a brilliant scene. The negotiations for peace with the Emperor, the political affairs of Germany, and the fate of the King of Sardinia, of Switzerland, Venice, and Genoa were here suspended in the balance. The court of Montebello made several excursions to the Lago Maggiore, the Borromean Isles, and the Lake of Como; taking up its temporary residence in the several country-houses which surrounded these beautiful spots. Every town and village was eager to testify its homage and respect to him whom they then considered, and still consider, as the *Liberator of Italy*. These circumstances all together made a strong impression on the diplomatic body. General Serrurier carried the last colours taken from the Archduke to the Directory, with a highly commendatory letter from Buonaparte,

in which he characterised him as one who was severe to himself and sometimes to others. He took a journey into his native department of the Aisne; and though of very moderate revolutionary principles, he returned to the army a warm and decided supporter of the Republic, having been highly incensed at the spirit of disaffection and vacillation he had observed in Paris.

The exchange of the ratifications of the preliminaries of Leoben took place at Montebello on the 24th of May, between Napoleon and the Marquis de Gallo. A question of etiquette arose for the first time: the Emperors of Germany did not give the Kings of France the alternative; the cabinet of Vienna was somewhat apprehensive that the Republic would not acknowledge this custom, and that the other powers of Europe, following the example of the French, would oblige the Holy Roman Empire to descend from that sort of supremacy it had enjoyed ever since the time of Charlemagne. It was in the first ecstasies of the Austrian minister at the acquiescence of France in the customary etiquette, that he renounced the idea of the Congress of Berne, and agreed to the following as the basis of a definitive treaty: 1. The boundary of the Rhine for France; 2. Venice and the boundary of the Adige for the Emperor; 3. Mantua and the boundary of the Adige for the Cisalpine Republic. Clarke, who was associated with Napoleon on this critical emergency, had been a captain in the Orleans dragoons when the Revolution broke out. From 1789 he attached himself to the Orleans party. In 1795 he was placed by the Committee of Public Safety at the head of the Topographical Department. Being patronised by Carnot, he was chosen by the Directory in 1796 to make overtures of peace to the Emperor, for which purpose he went to Milan. But the real object of his mission was less to open a negotiation than to act as a secret agent of the Directory at head-quarters, and to watch the General, whose victories already began

to give umbrage. Napoleon was aware of this; but being convinced that it is necessary for governments to have information, was glad they had entrusted this task to a man of known ability rather than to one of those subaltern agents who pick up the most absurd reports in antechambers and taverns. He, therefore, encouraged Clarke, and employed him in several negotiations with Sardinia and the Princes of Italy. Clarke's genius was not military; he was an official man, exact and upright in business, and a great enemy to knaves. He was descended from one of the Irish families that accompanied the Stuarts in their misfortunes. His foible was that of priding himself on his ancestry, and he rendered himself ridiculous in the Imperial reign by genealogical researches, which were strangely at variance with the opinions he had professed, the course of his life, and the circumstances of the times. In the time of the Empire, Clarke rendered important services by the integrity of his administration; and it has been remarked as the greatest blot upon his memory, that towards the end of his career he belonged to a ministry that made France pass under the *Caudine Forks*, by consenting to the disbanding of an army that had for twenty-five years been its country's glory, and by giving up to astonished Europe her still invincible fortresses.

Count Merfeld arrived at Montebello on the 19th of June. By him the cabinet of Vienna disavowed the Marquis de Gallo's concessions, and refused to treat, except in the Congress of Berne. There was an evident change of plan. Was this owing to a new coalition, to the advance of the Russian armies, to the effects of Pichegru's conspiracy, or to the civil war which ravaged the departments of the West, and which, it was hoped, might soon spread over all France, and put the supreme power into the hands of the insurgents? The Austrian plenipotentiaries had nothing to reply when Napoleon observed that England and Russia would never consent to give up Venice to the Emperor, and that it was a vain pretext to wait

to treat in conjunction with them. Thugut sent new instructions, and agreed to a separate negotiation. Buonaparte withdrew from this doubtful negotiation, leaving Clarke to manage it, and passed all July and August at Milan. Austria was watching to see the result of the troubles in France. The events of the 18th of Fructidor baffled all her hopes. Count Cobentzel then hastened to Udino, invested with full powers by the Emperor, whose entire confidence he possessed. Napoleon proceeded to Passeriano; Clarke having been recalled, he was now the only plenipotentiary on the part of France. The conferences were held alternately at Udino and at Passeriano. The four Austrian plenipotentiaries sat on one side of a rectangular table; at the two ends were the secretaries of legation; and on the other side was the French plenipotentiary. When the conferences were held at Passeriano, the dinner was given by Napoleon; when at Udino, it was given by Count Cobentzel. In the first conference the Count disclaimed all that his colleagues had been saying for four months, urging the most extravagant pretensions. With a man of this sort there was but one method of proceeding, which was to go as far beyond the true medium in the opposite direction as he did. This time the Austrian cabinet was sincere in its desire for peace; but it was now the turn of the Directory. The affair of the 18th of Fructidor had led them to trust too much to their own strength, and they refused to yield either Venice or the line of the Adige to the Emperor—a refusal that was equivalent to a declaration of war.

Napoleon in this dilemma did not know how to act. With respect to military operations he had fixed principles as to the degree of obedience the government had a right to exact. If he did not approve of the orders that were issued to him, he would have considered it criminal to undertake the execution of an injudicious plan, and in that case would have thought himself obliged to offer his resignation, as he had

done on one occasion. But he was not so clear as to the degree of obedience due from him as a plenipotentiary. Besides, his functions here were complicated. Was he to renounce his mission in the midst of a negotiation, or to declare war as a plenipotentiary, and at the same time to give up his command as a general, thus doubly involving his country in difficulties? The minister for Foreign Affairs extricated him from this uncertainty. In one of his dispatches he informed him that the Directory had thought he could enforce their *ultimatum*; but if not, that war or peace rested in his hands. He determined to abide by the terms settled at Montebello on the 6th of May. His principal reasons for being unwilling to prolong the war were, that it was too late in the season to advance further into Germany; that the command of the army of the Rhine was entrusted to Augereau, whose violent political opinions would prevent a proper harmony and understanding between the armies; that the reinforcement of 12,000 foot and 4000 horse which he had required had been refused; and that the Directory had resolved not to ratify the treaty with the King of Sardinia, thus creating a new enemy in their rear. The Directory indeed soon after sent word that they would furnish an army of 6000 men and ratify the treaty with Sardinia; but the treaty of Campo-Formio had been signed three days before the writing of these dispatches, which did not reach Passeriano till twelve days after the signature of the peace.

It was Napoleon's interest to conclude peace. The republican party at home already manifested a certain jealousy of him, and began to hint that so much glory was incompatible with liberty. If he had recommenced hostilities and the French army had occupied Vienna, the Directory would have been desirous to revolutionize Germany, which would have involved France in a new war with the rest of Europe. Had Napoleon broken off the negotiations, the blame would have rested with him; but by giving peace

at this time, he added to the glory of conquest that of terminating the war, and of being the founder of two republics. Thus crowned with laurels and with the olive-branch in his hand, he thought he should return safely into private life, like the great men of antiquity; the first act of his political career would be honourably concluded, circumstances and the interests of his country would regulate the remainder of it. France was anxious for peace. The quarrel of the Allied Kings with the Republic was a conflict of principles and a struggle on her part for existence, which had ended favourably for her. The General-in-Chief had conceived the project of changing this state of the question, which left France opposed singly to them all, and of throwing an apple of discord among the Allies, by creating a diversion of other interests and passions. Vain and mistaken policy, to suppose that any other object could distract their attention, while the great and paramount one of their sovereign power and existence by divine imprescriptible right remained unprovided for; which blinded him from first to last, and ruined him in the end by preventing him from seeing the abyss over which with every shifting breath of fortune he hung suspended! To make Austria odious by giving her up Venice was perhaps more feasible, and might serve as a warning to the lesser powers; but was not France also, whatever might be her provocations, a party to the wrong? Venice, after twelve hundred years of freedom, by passing under a foreign yoke for awhile, might be better prepared to merge her individual and lofty pretensions in the general incorporation of Italy; an object on which Buonaparte was always intent, and which he was about to have proclaimed fifteen years afterwards, as soon as he had a second son born to him. Austria, it is true, received but a barren equivalent for Lombardy and Belgium in Styria, and Carinthia, and Hungary; but these provinces were near and conveniently placed, and her situation was critical. Still the Austrian negotiator, Count Cobentzel, held



out strenuously to the last. He insisted on "the Adda as a boundary, or nothing. If the Emperor, my master," he said, "were to give you the keys of Mentz, the strongest fortress in the world, without changing them for the keys of Mantua, it would be a degrading act." Neither party would yield. At length, on the 16th of October, the conferences were held at Udino, where Buonaparte recapitulated the different arguments, and Count Cobentzel replied at great length, and concluded with saying that he should depart that night, at the same time throwing the blame on the French negotiator, who would be responsible for all the blood that should be shed in the ensuing contest. Upon this the latter, with great seeming coolness, although he was much irritated at this attack, arose, and took from the mantel-piece a little porcelain vase, which Count Cobentzel prized as a present from the Empress Catherine. "Well," said Napoleon, "the truce is at an end, and war is declared; but remember, that before the end of autumn I will shatter your monarchy as I shatter this porcelain." Saying so, he dashed it furiously down, and the carpet was instantly covered with the fragments. He then saluted the Congress and retired. The Austrian plenipotentiaries were struck dumb. A few moments afterwards, they found that as Napoleon got into his carriage, he had dispatched an officer to the Archduke Charles to inform him that the negotiations were broken off, and that hostilities would recommence in twenty-four hours. Count Cobentzel, seriously alarmed, sent the Marquis de Gallo to Passeriano with a written declaration that he consented to the *ultimatum* of France. The treaty was signed the following day, and was dated from Campo-Formio, a small village between Passeriano and Udino, which had been neutralized for that purpose by the secretaries of legation, though it was not thought necessary to remove thither, as there was no suitable house in the place for the accommodation of the plenipotentiaries.

By this treaty, in addition to the particulars already

stated, France was to have the Valteline, and Austria ceded Brigaw, which placed a greater distance between the Hereditary States and the French frontier. Mentz was to be given up at a general Congress that was to meet at Rastadt. The Princes of the Empire dispossessed on the left bank of the Rhine were to be indemnified out of the Ecclesiastical States. Corfu, Zante, Cephalonia, Santa Maura, and Cerigo were ceded to France, in exchange for two millions of souls added to the Austrian dominions on the left bank of the Adige. By a special article of the treaty, the property which the Archduke Charles possessed in Belgium as the heir of the Archduchess Christina, was secured to him. Napoleon afterwards, when Emperor, purchased the mansion of Lacken, near Brussels, for a million of francs. This stipulation was intended as a mark of respect on the part of the French plenipotentiary to the General he had been fighting with. Buonaparte prided himself on his talent for making peace as much as on his talent for making war, and was always anxious (with reason) to repel the imputation of being a mere military man. He was more willing to admit an equality with himself in the field than in the cabinet, and thought he had overcome greater difficulties and accomplished more improbable things in the one than in the other. There is something chivalrous in his mode of negotiation; and the same appearance of firmness, promptitude, clearness, and determination to leave nothing unattempted by art or force in both.

During the conferences at Passeriano, General Desaix came from the army of the Rhine to visit the fields of battle which the army of Italy had rendered so famous. Napoleon received him at head-quarters, and thought to surprise him by imparting to him the light which the discovery of D'Entraigues' portfolio threw on Pichegru's conduct. "We have long known," said Desaix, smiling, "that Pichegru was a traitor. Moreau found proofs of the fact in Kinglin's papers, with all the particulars of the bribes he had

received, and the concerted motives of his military manœuvres. Moreau, Regnier, and myself are the only persons in the secret. I wished Moreau to inform Government of it immediately, but he would not. Pichegru," added he, "is perhaps the only general who ever got himself purposely beaten." He alluded to the manœuvre by which Pichegru had intentionally moved his principal force up the Rhine, in order to prevent the success of the operations before Mentz. Desaix visited the camps, and was received with the greatest respect in all of them. This was the commencement of the friendship between him and Napoleon. He loved glory for glory's sake, and his country above everything. He was of an unsophisticated pleasing character, and possessed extensive information. He had thoroughly studied the theatre of the war along the Rhine. The victor of Marengo shed tears for his death.

Hoche about this time died suddenly at Mentz. This young general distinguished himself at the lines of Weissemburg in 1794, and for a short time pacified La Vendée. He marched his troops on Paris at the crisis of the 18th of Fructidor. He is famous for having landed the expedition in Ireland. Enthusiastic, brave, and restless, he knew not how to wait for opportunities, but exposed himself to failure by premature enterprises. He, on all occasions, expressed a high regard for Napoleon. By his death and the disgrace of Moreau, the command of the armies both of the Sambre and Meuse and of the Rhine became vacant. The Directory united them into one, and gave the command to Augereau.

Berthier took the treaty of Campo-Formio to Paris; and Buonaparte, as a mark of his respect for the sciences and of his personal esteem, sent Monge along with him. The General-in-Chief was fond of the conversation of this great geometrician, who loved the French people as his own family, and liberty and equality as the results of a mathematical demonstration. At the time of the invasion of France by the

Prussians in 1792, he offered to give his two daughters in marriage to the first volunteers who should lose a limb in the defence of their native soil ; and this offer, however extravagant it may sound, was in him sincere and heartfelt. He accompanied Napoleon into Egypt ; and always remained faithful to him. Immediately after the signature of the treaty, Buonaparte returned to Milan, when he took leave of the Italians in an energetic and flattering address, and issued the following order of the day to the army : " Soldiers, I set out to-morrow for Germany. Separated from the army, I shall sigh for the moment of my rejoining it, and braving fresh dangers. Whatever post Government may assign to the soldiers of the army of Italy, they will always be the worthy supporters of liberty and of the glory of the French name. Soldiers, when you talk of the princes you have conquered, of the nations you have set free, and the battles you have fought in two campaigns, say—*In the next two we shall do still more !*"

Napoleon proceeded to Turin, where he alighted at Guingené's, the French minister's, on the 17th of November. The King of Sardinia desired to see him and to express his obligations in a public manner ; but circumstances were already such that he did not think it expedient to indulge in court entertainments. He continued his journey to Rastadt across Mont Cenis. At Geneva he was received as he might have expected to be, had it been a French town. On his entering the Pays de Vaud, three parties of handsome young girls came to compliment him at the head of the inhabitants : one party was clothed in white, another in red, and a third in blue. These maidens presented him with a crown, on which was inscribed the famous sentence which proclaimed the liberty of the Valteline, and so dear to the hearts of the Vaudois, that *one nation cannot be subject to another*. He passed through several Swiss towns, Berne among others, and crossed the Rhine at Bâle, proceeding towards Rastadt. He here found Treillard and

Bonnier, appointed by the Directory, and who had arrived before him. Old Count Metternich represented the Emperor as head of the Germanic Confederation; Count Cobenzel as head of the House of Austria. The greatest opposition arose as to the first article, the delivering up of Mentz. All the German princes complained loudly against it. They said that Mentz did not belong to Austria, and they did not scruple to accuse the Emperor of having betrayed Germany for the sake of his interests in Italy. Count Lerbach, as deputy for the Circle of Austria, had to answer all these protestations, of which task he acquitted himself with all the energy, arrogance, and superciliousness, which marked his character. Sweden also appeared at Rastadt as a mediatrix, and as one of the powers which had guaranteed the treaty of Westphalia. This claim was somewhat obsolete. That court had moreover sent Baron Fersen as its representative to the Congress, whose appointment, from the favour he had enjoyed at the court of Versailles,\* his intrigues in the time of the Constituent Assembly, and the hatred he had on all occasions expressed against France, might be regarded as an insult to the Republic. On his first interview Napoleon told him that he could not acknowledge any mediator; and as his known opinions particularly disqualified him from coming forward in that capacity between the Republic and the Emperor of Germany, he could receive him no more. Baron Fersen, disconcerted by this reception, which was much talked of, left Rastadt the following day.

Immediately after the surrender of Mentz to the French troops, Buonaparte finding affairs grow more complicated every day, and already dissatisfied with the foreign policy of the Directory, determined to meddle no farther in a negotiation that seemed to promise no probable end. In the heated and unsettled state of parties in France, the same motives

\* He was a favourite of the Queen's, and in disguise drove the carriage in which the King set out to Varennes.

which had induced him to shun the civilities of the court of Sardinia, led him to withdraw himself from the flattering marks of attention which the German princes lavished upon him. During his short stay at the Congress, he procured the French plenipotentiaries, who had been previously very much neglected, the respect and consideration to which they were entitled as the representatives of a great nation; and he also persuaded the Government to increase the allowance of the negotiators, so as to enable them to appear on a footing of equality with the ambassadors of foreign courts. It ought not to be passed over in this place, that Napoleon among other conditions of the treaty of Campo-Formio, had procured the liberation of La Fayette and his unfortunate companions, who had been confined for four years in the dungeons of Olmutz; and it should be known, in justice to all parties, that this article cost him more trouble than all the rest. Napoleon left Rastadt, travelled through France *incognito*, reached Paris without stopping on the road, and alighted at his small house in the Chaussée d'Antin, Rue Chantereine. The different public bodies vied with each other in expressing the gratitude of the nation towards him. A committee of the Council of Ancients drew up an act for settling the estate of Chambord and a mansion in the capital upon him; but this proposal was in some way defeated by the Directory. The name of the Rue de la Victoire was given to the Rue Chantereine. It is needless to add that it no longer bears that name; but victory and defeat, and a thousand other recollections will remain for ever engraved upon it in all the bright and solemn obscurity of a dream.\*

\* His general manner in society, at the period of his return from Italy in 1797, is described by Madame de Stael in the following words:—"He was different in his manner from other men, and neither pleased nor angry, kind nor severe, after the common fashion of humanity. He appeared to live for the execution of his own plans, and to consider others only in so far as they were connected with, and could advance or oppose them. He estimated his fellow-mortals no otherwise than as they could be useful to his views,

and, with a precision of intelligence which seemed intuitive from its rapidity, he penetrated the sentiments of those whom it was worth his while to study. He did not then possess the ordinary tone of light conversation in society; probably his mind was too much burdened, or too proud, to stoop to adopt that mode of pleasing; and there was a stiffness and reserve of manner which was perhaps adopted for the purpose of keeping people at a distance. His look had the same character. When he thought himself closely observed, he had the power of discharging from his countenance all expression, save that of a vague and indefinite smile, and presenting to the curious investigator the fixed eyes and rigid features of a bust of marble. When he talked for the purpose of pleasing, Buonaparte often told anecdotes of his life in a very pleasing manner; when silent, he had something disdainful in the expression of his face; when disposed to be quite at ease, he was rather vulgar. His natural tone of feeling seemed to be a sense of internal superiority, and of secret contempt for the world in which he lived, the men with whom he acted, and even the very objects which he pursued. His character and manners were, upon the whole, strongly calculated to attract the attention of the French nation, and to excite a perpetual interest even from the very mystery which attached to him, as well as from the splendour of his triumphs."

## CHAPTER XIV.

## NEGOTIATIONS IN 1797.

Events in Italy during the negotiations for peace ; historical sketch of Venice ; hostility of that city to the French republic ; insurrection at Verona, massacre of the French ; quelled by General Balland ; Napoleon's declaration of war against Venice ; terror of the Venetian aristocracy ; entry of the French into Venice ; Corfu taken possession of ; intrigues of Count d'Entraigues ; Genoa ; struggles between the popular party and the aristocracy ; serious tumults ; a democratical constitution established ; statue of Andrew Doria broken ; Cisalpine republic formed by Napoleon.

**G**REAT and important changes had taken place in the course of the five months that elapsed between the ratification of the preliminaries of Leoben and the signing of the treaty of Campo-Formio, on which they had a considerable influence. It is necessary to turn back to them here. The events of the 18th of Fructidor, which also belong to this interval, will be treated of in a subsequent chapter.

Venice was founded in the fifth century by the inhabitants of the neighbouring shores who sought refuge there from the incursions of the barbarians. In the earliest time Padua gave laws to the Venetians. In 697 they first named a Doge of their own. King Pepin constructed a flotilla at Ravenna, and compelled the Venetians to retire from Grado and Heraclea to Realto and the surrounding isles, which is the present situation of Venice. In 830 the body of St. Mark the Evangelist having been, according to tradition, transported thither from Egypt, he became the patron-saint of the Republic. In 960 the Venetians were masters of Istria and the Adriatic ; and in 1250, in conjunction with the French, took Constantinople.



They were in possession of the Morea and Candia till the middle of the seventeenth century; and amidst all the revolutions and changes of masters to which Italy has been subject, Venice still remained independent and free, having never submitted to a foreign yoke. It is the best-situated commercial port in all Italy. Before the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope, Venice carried on the trade with India by Alexandria and the Red Sea; and afterwards maintained a long struggle for the priority with the Portuguese. After the abolition of the democracy in 1200, the sovereignty resided in the aristocracy of several hundred families whose names were inscribed in the Golden Book, and who were entitled to vote in the Grand Council. The population of the States of the Republic was composed chiefly of three millions of inhabitants dispersed in the Terra Firma, Istria, Dalmatia, and the Ionian Isles. The Venetian territory is bounded to the north by the upper ridge of the Julian Alps, over which there are only three outlets into Germany. At the time of the breaking out of the French Revolution, Venice was but the shadow of its former self. Three generations had passed away without engaging in war; during which time they had submitted to the insults of the Austrians, French, and Spaniards without offering the least resistance. Their navy consisted of twelve sixty-four gun ships, as many frigates, with smaller vessels, sufficient to keep the barbarians in awe; and their army, 14,000 strong, was made up of regiments raised in the Terra Firma or of Sclavonian recruits. None but the families inscribed in the Golden Book had any right to share in the government. This rendered the nobles of the Terra Firma, among whom were many rich, old, and powerful families, whose ancestors had long fought against Venice, discontented, and sowed the seeds of dissension and a desire of change amongst them.

In 1792 the Combined Powers invited Venice to take part in the war; but the Republic thought itself

too distant to feel any but a very languid interest in the affairs of France, and even when the Count de Lille (Louis XVIII.) took refuge in Verona, the Senate did not grant him permission to remain there, till it had obtained the acquiescence of the Committee of Public Safety. When in 1794 the French troops marched towards Oneglia, it was thought that Italy was menaced with invasion, and several powers held a congress at Milan. Venice refused to appear there, not because she approved of French principles, but as fearing to place herself at the mercy of Austria, and unwilling to depart from that tame and enervated policy which she had so long pursued. But when Napoleon arrived at Milan and Beaulieu fled in consternation beyond the Mincio, occupying Peschiera, great anxiety and alarm prevailed in the Senate. The wide space which had hitherto separated Venice from the struggle that was going on between the old and new forms of government had now been traversed; the blow had fallen like a thunderbolt at her feet; and stormy discussions arose in the councils, in which three different opinions were contended for. The young and hot-headed members of the oligarchy wished for an armed neutrality: they advised that strong garrisons should be thrown into Peschiera, Brescia, Porto Legnago, and Verona; that the army should be increased to 60,000 men, the coasts put in a state of defence, and protected with gun-boats; and that in this formidable attitude the Republic should declare war against the first power that violated its neutrality. The partisans of the old policy still maintained, on the other hand, that it would be best to take no decisive measures, but to temporise, give way, and watch the course of events. The encroachments of Austria and the principles of France were both to be dreaded, but these evils were but temporary; the French were of a placable disposition, easily won by attention and caresses; the Venetian capital was fortunately placed out of the reach of insult; and patience, moderation, and time would do

the rest. The third party, at the head of whom was Battaglia, proposed in the extremity to which they were reduced to augment the Golden Book, so as to obtain the good-will and adherence of the inhabitants of the Terra Firma; to offer the French General an offensive and defensive alliance, and thus secure the foundations of the constitution and their independence from the power of Austria. This advice gained but few suffrages, and aristocratical prejudices prevailed over the interests of the Republic.

The proveditore Mocenigo at Brescia received Napoleon in a style of great magnificence; splendid fêtes were given, and an intimacy was studiously cemented between the officers of the army and the principal families of the town. At Verona, the proveditore Foscarelli pretended to do the same thing; but he was of too proud and violent a character to disguise his ill-will to the French. On Napoleon's arrival at Peschiera, he endeavoured to dissuade him from marching on Verona, and even refused to deliver up the keys of the city. "It is too late," said the General-in-Chief; "neutrality consists in having the same weight and measure for all parties. If you are not my enemies, you must grant me what you have granted, or at least tolerated in my enemies." With the advance of the French, a considerable agitation spread through the Terra Firma. The ancient animosity entertained against the oligarchy was strengthened by an attachment to the new opinions. "What right has Venice," said the inhabitants, "to govern our cities? Are we less brave, enlightened, opulent, or noble than the Venetians?" Everything announced the approach of a violent catastrophe. Buonaparte did all in his power to moderate this popular impulse. On his return from Tolentino, and before marching on Vienna, he thought it high time to settle the affairs of this country, and sent for Pesaro, who at that time managed the concerns of the Republic, to urge upon him the acceptance of Battaglia's plan of accommodation. Pesaro set out for Venice, undertaking to employ

his good offices. In the meantime, Bergamo and Brescia had openly revolted, and repulsed the Venetian troops who were sent against them. Pesaro, on returning to head-quarters, found them at Goritz. The Archduke had been defeated at the Tagliamento, and the French flag waved on the summit of the Julian Alps. "Have I kept my word," said Napoleon; "or does the Republic accept my alliance?" "Venice," replied Pesaro, "rejoices in your triumphs; she knows that she cannot exist but by means of France; but faithful to her ancient and wise policy, she wishes to remain neutral." Napoleon made a last effort, but failed. On Pesaro's taking leave, he said to him, "I am marching on Vienna. Things that I might have forgiven when I was in Italy, would be unpardonable crimes when I am in Germany. Should my soldiers be assassinated, my convoys harassed, and my communications intercepted in the Venetian territories, your Republic will have ceased to exist."

After the movement of Joubert to join the army in Carinthia, Laudon, who was left to guard the Tyrol, increased his force by 10,000 Tyrolese militia, beat General Serviez's little corps of observation, and compelled him to retreat on Montebaldo, occupying Trent. Being master of the Tyrol, he inundated Italy with proclamations, filled with the most absurd reports of the defeat of the French armies, the brilliant victories of the Archduke Charles, and his own advance with 60,000 men to cut off the retreat of the wreck of the army of Italy. On this intelligence the Venetian oligarchy no longer kept any terms. It was in vain that the French minister alleged the falsehood of these statements, and endeavoured to convince the Senate that it was digging a pit for itself. Pesaro, who ruled its decisions, was too desirous of the defeat of the French not to credit these communications; and Austria was busy at work in fomenting insurrections in the rear of the invading army. Order was maintained by the prudence of Mocenigo in Friuli, which was nearer the scene of operations; but in the

Veronese more than 30,000 peasants had been secretly furnished with arms, and only waited the signal for slaughter. The provveditore Emili concerted measures with Laudon, apprising him of the weakness of the garrison of Verona; and on the 17th of April (Tuesday in Easter week) after vespers the tocsin sounded. The insurrection broke out at the same time in the city and country; the French were massacred on all sides, and four hundred sick were murdered in the hospitals. General Balland shut himself up in the castles with the garrison. The fire of the forts, which he directed against the city, induced the Veronese authorities to hold a parley, but the rage of the multitude interrupted it; and emboldened by the arrival of 2000 Slavonians from Vicenza, and the approach of the Austrian General Nieperg, they revenged the mischief done by the bombardment of the city, by slaughtering the garrison of Chiusa, which had been obliged to surrender to the levy in mass of the mountaineers.

General Kilmaine, who was entrusted with the chief command of Lombardy, sent to the relief of General Balland as soon as he heard of the insurrection at Verona. On the 21st of April his first columns appeared before its gates; and Generals Chabran, Lahoz, and Chevalier came up on the day following. On the 23rd the signature of the preliminaries of peace became known to the insurgents, with the news that Victor's division was on its march from Treviso. They were now seized with consternation, and their fear being equal to their former fury, accepted on their knees the conditions which General Balland imposed on them. The French were entitled to make severe reprisals; but only three of the inhabitants were delivered up to the tribunals; a general disarming was effected, and the peasants were sent home to their villages.

The Venetians, equally infatuated, also suffered the crew of a French privateer, which being pursued by an Austrian frigate had taken shelter under

the batteries of the Lido (where it was entitled to protection) to be murdered before their eyes; and when the French minister demanded redress for this outrage, the Senate both laughed at his threats and remonstrances, and rewarded such of its satellites as had participated in the murder of Captain Laugier and his men. It is thus that the old governments, whenever they had an opportunity, have treated the French people as a set of outlaws, with whom no faith was to be kept, nor any mercy shown to them, at the same time lifting up their hands and eyes at every infringement of the nicest punctilio on their parts, as an unheard-of and wanton aggression on all lawful authority.\* As soon as Napoleon heard of these events, he sent Junot to Venice, charging him to present a letter to the Senate, in which he reproached them with their treachery and duplicity. That officer fulfilled his mission with the plain bluntness of a soldier. Terror prevailed in the government. The Senate humbled itself and endeavoured to find excuses, and sent a deputation to the General-in-Chief at Gratz to offer every reparation he might require, and to bribe all those who had any credit with him. This method succeeded better at Paris than in the army; and the Directory showed themselves favourable to the Senate in the orders they sent. But Napoleon, by means of some intercepted dispatches, had in his hands the proofs of the intrigue that had been carried on, and he annulled, of his own authority, all that had been done. On the 3rd of May he issued from his camp at Palma-Nuova the following declaration of war against the Republic of Venice.

“Whilst the French army is in the defiles of

\* On this principle the captain of an English seventy-four attacked the French frigate *Modeste* in the port of Genoa, then at peace with France, desiring him to hoist the white flag, and saying he did not know what the tri-coloured flag meant. The crew of the *Modeste*, to escape the fire of the seventy-four, threw themselves into the water, and were pursued and killed or wounded by the English boats. This happened in October, 1793, and would at that time be considered as a fine trait of our contempt for the enemy, and consequent superiority over them.

Styria, having left Italy and its principal establishments far behind, where only a few battalions remained, this is the line of conduct pursued by the government of Venice. It takes the opportunity of Passion-week to arm 40,000 peasants, adds ten regiments of Sclavonians to that force, forms them into several corps, and posts them at different points to intercept the communications of the army. Extraordinary commissions, muskets, ammunition of all kinds, and artillery are sent from the city of Venice to complete the organization of the different corps. All who received the French in a friendly manner in the Terra Firma are arrested, while those who are distinguished by an outrageous hatred of the French name obtain the favours and entire confidence of the government; and especially the fourteen conspirators of Verona, whom the proveditore Priuli had caused to be arrested three months ago as convicted of having plotted the slaughter of the French. In the squares, coffee-houses, and other public places at Venice, the French are insulted, called Jacobins, regicides, and atheists; and at length are expelled the city with a prohibition ever to return. The people of Padua, Vicenza, and Verona are ordered to take up arms, to second the different bodies of troops, and in short to begin these new Sicilian Vespers. It is ours, say the Venetian officers, to verify the proverb, that *Italy is the tomb of the French!* The priests from their pulpits preach a crusade; and in the States of Venice, priests never utter any thing but what is dictated by the government. Pamphlets, perfidious proclamations, and anonymous letters are printed in various towns, and begin to work upon the minds of the people; and in a state in which liberty of the press is not allowed—in a government not less dreaded than secretly abhorred—authors and printers only write and publish what is approved by the Senate. At first everything seems to favour the treacherous designs of the government; French blood flows in all directions. On every road the convoys, couriers, and all belonging to the army

are intercepted. At Padua a chief of battalion and two other Frenchmen are murdered; at Castiglione di Mori several soldiers are disarmed and murdered; on the high roads of Mantua to Legnago and from Cassano to Verona, upwards of 200 French are murdered. Two battalions on their way to join the army, are met at Chiari by a Venetian division, which opposes their progress. An obstinate action commences; and our brave soldiers force a passage over the bodies of their enemies. At Valeggio there is another engagement; and at Dezenzano they are again obliged to fight. The French are in all these cases few in number, but they are accustomed to disregard the numbers of their enemies. On the second holiday of Easter, at the ringing of the bell, all the French in Verona are murdered; the assassins spare neither the sick in the hospitals nor those who are convalescent and walking in the streets: the last are thrown into the Adige, after receiving a thousand stabs with stilettoes. Upwards of 400 soldiers are thus massacred. During eight days the Venetian army besieges the three castles of Verona; the cannon it plants against them are taken by the French at the point of the bayonet; the city is set on fire, and the corps of observation, which comes up during these transactions, completely routs these cowards, taking 3000 prisoners, with several generals. The house of the French Consul at Zante is burnt down. In Dalmatia, a Venetian man-of-war takes an Austrian convoy under its protection, and fires several shots at the sloop *La Brune*. The Republican ship *Le Libérateur d'Italie*, carrying only three or four small guns, is sunk in the port of Venice by order of the government. The young and lamented Lieutenant Laugier, her commander, finding himself attacked both by the fire of the fort and that of the Admiral's galley, being within pistol-shot of both, orders his crew under hatches. He alone mounts on deck amidst a shower of grape-shot, and endeavours to disarm the fury of the assassins by addressing them;



but he falls dead on the spot. His crew betake themselves to swimming, and are pursued by six boats, manned by troops in the pay of the Republic of Venice, who kill several of the French with axes as they are endeavouring to save their lives by swimming towards the sea. A boatswain, wounded in several places, weakened and bleeding profusely, is fortunate enough to make the shore, and clings to a piece of timber projecting from the harbour castle; but the commandant himself chops off his hand with an axe.

“Considering the above-mentioned grievances, and authorised, by title XII, article 328, of the constitution of the Republic, and seeing the urgency of the occasion, the General-in-Chief requires the minister of France to the Republic of Venice to depart from the said city; orders the different agents of the Venetian Republic in Lombardy and the Venetian Terra Firma to depart within twenty-four hours; orders the different generals of division to treat the troops of the Republic of Venice as enemies; and to pull down the Lion of St. Mark in every town of the Terra Firma. To-morrow in the order of the day, each of them will receive particular instructions respecting further military proceedings.”

On reading this manifesto the weapons fell from the hands of the oligarchy, who no longer thought of defending themselves. The Grand Council of the state dissolved itself, and a municipal body was entrusted with the supreme power. Thus this haughty aristocracy fell without a struggle. In its last agonies it in vain supplicated the court of Austria to be included in the general peace; but that court turned a deaf ear to its entreaties, having opposite views of its own. On the 11th of May, Baraguay d'Hilliers entered Venice at the call of the inhabitants, who were in dread of the Slavonian troops. The tri-coloured flag was hoisted in St. Mark's Place, and the popular constitution was declared by the partisans of freedom, who chose Dandolo for their head. The Lion of St. Mark and the Corinthian horses on the gates of the

Doge's palace were removed to Paris. The Venetian fleet was manned and sent to Toulon. General Gentili, the same who had driven the English out of Corsica, proceeded to Corfu and took possession of this place, the key to the Adriatic, and of the other Ionian islands. Pesaro was overwhelmed by the general reprobation and escaped to Vienna. Battaglia deeply regretted the fall of his country, and did not long survive it. The Doge Manini suddenly fell down dead, while taking the oath to Austria, administered by Morosini, who afterwards became the Emperor's commissioner. On the receipt of the order of the day, declaring war against Venice, the whole Terra Firma revolted, and adopted the principles of the French Revolution, abolishing convents and suppressing feudal tenures. Notwithstanding the care of Napoleon to prevent abuses and peculation, more disorders were committed on this occasion than during any other period of the war. The bank at Verona was plundered of property to the amount of seven or eight millions of francs. Bouquet, a commissary, and Andrieux, a colonel of hussars, were accused of being concerned in this robbery, and compelled to refund all that was found upon them. Bernadotte presented the colours taken from the Venetians and other trophies to the Directory a few days before the 18th of Fructidor—a sort of ceremony very useful to the government at that period; for the disaffected were overawed and silenced by these frequent displays of the spirit and success of the armies.

At the moment of the entrance of the French troops into Venice, one of the persons who escaped from that city was the Count d'Entraigues. He was arrested on the Brenta by Bernadotte's division, and sent to the head-quarters at Milan. Count d'Entraigues was a native of the Vivarais, was a deputy from the noblesse to the Constituent Assembly, and at first an ardent assertor of liberty; but soon after changed sides, emigrated, and became one of the principal agents of the foreign party. He had been two years at Venice in

this capacity, and was suspected of having had an important share in the massacres at Verona. In consequence of papers found upon him, he was ordered to be tried by a military commission; but in the interim he applied to Napoleon, to whom he made unreserved communications, discovered all the intrigues of the time, and compromised his party more than it was necessary to do. He received permission to reside in the city on his parol and without a guard. Some time after he made his escape into Switzerland, where he published and circulated with great industry a pamphlet against his benefactor, describing the horrible dungeon in which he had been immured, the tortures he had suffered, the boldness he had displayed, and the dangers he had braved in making his escape. This excited a great deal of indignation at Milan, where he had been seen in the public walks and theatres enjoying the utmost liberty—an instance among so many others of the gratitude of those slaves of power who think that to lie is a court privilege, and that to disregard every common obligation of truth or justice is the distinguishing characteristic of a gentleman and a man of honour, and the most acceptable compliment they can pay to their superiors!

Genoa came in for its share in the negotiations carried on in the summer of 1797 at Montebello. This little Republic had been engaged in continual wars and struggles, both with Corsica and other states, during the whole of the last century, and kept up its spirit and energy much better than the Republic of Venice had done during that time. The Genoese aristocracy had accordingly faced the storm that for some time threatened them, and suffered neither the Allied Powers nor France nor the popular party among themselves to intimidate them. The Republic had maintained the constitution which Andrew Doria had given it in the sixteenth century in its original integrity. But the proclamation of the independence of the Cispadan and Transpadan Republics, the abdication of the aristocracy of Venice, and the enthusiasm

which the victories of the French excited, gave such a preponderance to the popular party, that a change in the government became unavoidable. Yet France wished the Genoese to bring this about themselves without appearing in it. Faypoult, the French minister, was a man of moderation and prudence, which favoured this object. The Morandi club, on the other hand, impatient of the slow progress of the revolution, wished to precipitate matters, and drew up a petition to the Doge to proclaim the triumph of liberty, who did not seem averse to the measure, as he appointed a junta of nine persons, four of them being of the plebeian class, to propose alterations in the Constitution to him.

The three state inquisitors or supreme censors, who were the leaders of the oligarchy and the enemies of France, beheld this turn of affairs with dissatisfaction. Being convinced that the aristocracy could not subsist many months longer if they permitted events to take their obvious course, they called in the aid of fanaticism, and excited the enthusiasm of the colliers and porters by the usual artifices of preaching, of miracles, the elevation of the host, and prayers of forty hours. The Morandists, on their part, were not idle, but incensed the people against the priests and nobles by every expedient, and made a great number of proselytes. Thinking things ripe for the attempt, on the 22nd of May, at ten o'clock in the morning, they seized on the gates of the arsenal, San Tomaso, and the port. The terrified inquisitors gave the signal to the colliers and porters, who in a few hours assembled at the armoury, with shouts of *Viva Maria*, to the amount of 10,000. The patriots in despair mounted the French cockade, which enraged the populace, and nearly proved fatal to the French families settled in Genoa and to the minister Faypoult. Several persons were massacred. The naval commissioner, Menard, a retired and inoffensive man, was dragged by the hair of his head as far as the light-house fort; the consul, La Chaise, had his house plundered and escaped with

difficulty. In the midst of the tumult, Admiral Bruyes, returning from Corsica with two men-of-war and two frigates, came in sight of the port, but Faypoult had the weakness to send him orders not to land, but to make for Toulon.

The oligarchy had been persuaded that Napoleon would connive at these disorders, but no sooner was he informed of the events which had taken place and of the shedding of French blood, than he dispatched Lavalette to Genoa, and required of the Doge that all the French should be set at liberty, their property protected, the colliers disarmed, and that the French minister should repair to Tortona with such of the French families as chose to follow him. Though the French were immediately released on the arrival of Lavalette, the answer of the Senate was not satisfactory; but as soon as they found that Faypoult demanded his passport, they met again, and resolved that a deputation consisting of the Doge Cambiaso, Serra, and Carbonari should proceed directly to Montebello; that the colliers should be disarmed, and the three inquisitors put under arrest. On the 6th of June the deputies from the Senate signed a convention at Montebello which put an end to the power of the oligarchy, and established a democratical constitution at Genoa.

The people, intoxicated with the news, committed several excesses, burnt the Golden Book, and broke the statue of Doria in pieces. Buonaparte was much displeased at this outrage on the memory of a great man, the real benefactor of his country, which showed the blindness of the multitude who look neither before nor behind them; and required the Provisional Government to repair the statue. The exclusionists, however, got the upper hand, and everything was subjected to their influence, by which means the priests were rendered discontented and the nobles highly exasperated, being shut out from all offices in the state. The constitution was to be submitted to the approbation of the people on the 11th of September; it was printed and posted in all the com-

munes. Several of the country cantons declared against it ; and insurrections broke out in the valleys of Polcevera and the Bisagno, which General Duphot was compelled to put down by an armed force. Tranquillity was thus restored, and the peasants were disarmed. This news was a disappointment to Napoleon. He was then much occupied by the negotiation with Austria, but he had strongly recommended that the priests should be conciliated and the nobles admitted to public offices ; since to exclude them would be the same glaring piece of injustice towards them that had been made the subject of such loud complaints against them. The constitution was afterwards modified according to this suggestion, and carried into effect with general approbation. Not a single French soldier passed beyond Tortona during this change, which was owing to the influence of the Third Estate. The advice given by Napoleon to the Genoese Republic was also intended for the French government, who were then debating on the motion of Siéyes to expel all the nobles from France and give them the value of their estates in manufactured goods. They took the hint, and this violent measure was no more talked of.

Immediately after the refusal of the court of Vienna to ratify the convention signed at Montebello by the Marquis de Gallo, Napoleon united the Cispadan and Transpadan Republics into one, under the title of the Cisalpine Republic. Some persons objected to this title, and would have had it called the Transalpine Republic, making Paris the centre of everything ; but the Italians had fixed their eyes on Rome, and this appellation flattered their hopes and was dictated by the soundest policy. The people on the two banks of the Po, the inhabitants of Reggio, Modena, Bologna, and Ferrara, from old antipathies and local prejudices, had a great aversion to uniting into one government ; and nothing could well have overcome this repugnance but the secret hope held out to them that it was but the prelude to the union of all the nations of the

Peninsula under a single head. By the treaty of Campo-Formio the Cisalpine Republic obtained the addition of that part of the states of Venice which was situated on the right bank of the Adige, which, together with the acquisition of the Valteline, gave it a population of 3,600,000 souls. These provinces, without doubt the richest and finest in Europe, formed ten departments, extending from the mountains of Switzerland to the Tuscan and Roman Apennines, and from the Ticino to the Adriatic.

Napoleon would willingly have given the Cisalpine State a constitution different from that of France; and with this view desired to have some celebrated publicist, such as Siéyes, sent to him at Milan: but the Directory would not hear of any alteration in this respect. A general federation of the National Guards and the authorities of the new Republic, took place at the Lazaretto of Milan. On the 14th of July, 30,000 National Guards, with the deputies from the departments, took an oath of fraternity, and swore to use their utmost efforts to revive the liberty of Italy and make her once more a nation. The keys of Milan and of the fortresses were delivered by the French to the Cisalpine officers. The army left the States of the Republic, and went into cantonments in the territory of Venice. From this period may be dated the first formation of the Italian army, which afterwards acquired so great a share of glory. The manners of the Italians underwent a striking change. The cassock, the fashionable dress for youth, gave place to regimentals: instead of passing their time at the feet of women, the young Italians now frequented the riding and fencing-schools and places of exercise: the children no longer played at *chapel*, but had regiments armed with tin guns, and mimicked the occurrences of war in their favourite games. In their comedies and street-farces, there had always been an Italian, who was represented as a very cowardly though witty fellow, and a kind of bullying captain, sometimes a Frenchman, but more frequently a German, a very

powerful, brave, and brutal character, who never failed to conclude with caning the Italian, to the great satisfaction and applause of the spectators. But such allusions were now no longer endured by the populace, who insisted on seeing valiant Italians introduced on the stage, putting foreigners to flight and defending themselves with resolution and boldness. A national spirit had arisen; Italy had her patriotic and warlike songs; and the women contemptuously repulsed those suitors who affected effeminate manners in order to please them.

The Valteline, which was incorporated with the Cisalpine Republic, is composed of three valleys, the Valteline properly so called, the Bormio, and the Chiavenna: its population is 160,000 souls; and the inhabitants profess the Roman Catholic religion, and speak Italian. It belongs geographically to Italy; it borders the Adda down to its discharge into the Lake of Como, and is separated from Germany by the Higher Alps, being eighteen leagues in length and six in breadth. Chiavenna, its capital, is two leagues from the lake of Como, and fourteen from Coire in Switzerland. The Valteline was anciently part of the Milanese. Barnabas Visconti, Archbishop and Duke of Milan, in 1404, gave these three valleys to the church of Coire. In 1512 the Grison Leagues were invested with the sovereignty by Sforza upon certain conditional statutes which the Dukes of Milan were to guarantee. The people of the Valteline thus found themselves subject to the three Leagues, the inhabitants of which were separated from them by religion, language, and situation.

There is no condition more dreadful than that of a nation which is subject to another nation. It was thus that the Lower Valais was subject to the Upper Valais, and the Pays de Vaud to the canton of Berne. The unfortunate people of the Valteline had long complained of the oppressions under which they groaned. The Grisons, poor and ignorant, came to enrich themselves in the Valteline. The lowest peasant of the



Leagues considered himself as much superior to the richest inhabitant of the Valteline, as a sovereign is to his subjects. In the course of May, 1797, the people of the three valleys revolted, unfurled the tri-coloured flag, published a manifesto setting forth their grievances and the rights of which they had been deprived, and sent the deputies Juidiconni, Planta, and Paribelli to Montebello to claim the execution of their statutes, which had been violated by the Grisons in every point. Napoleon was reluctant to interfere in questions which might affect Switzerland; but being called upon by both parties, and finding on examination into the archives of Milan that the Milanese government was invested with the right of guaranteeing the statutes, he accepted the office of mediator. Napoleon previously to giving any decision, invited both parties to come to an amicable arrangement, and proposed as a mode of accommodation, that the Valteline should form a fourth League upon a footing of equality with the three former. This suggestion deeply wounded the pride of the Grisons. How could it be imagined, they said, that a peasant who drinks the water of the Adda could be the equal of one who drinks the water of the Rhine? They therefore rejected with disdain so unreasonable a proposal as that of equalizing Catholic peasants who spoke Italian and were rich and well informed, with Protestant peasants who spoke German and were poor and ignorant. The leading characters among them did not share these prejudices, but were misled by avarice. They declined measures of accommodation, and sent no deputies at the time appointed for hearing the different claims, though they had before agreed to do so. Buonaparte accordingly gave judgment by default against the Leagues, and in a decision pronounced the 10th of October, 1797, gave the people of the Valteline liberty to unite themselves with the Cisalpine Republic. The Grisons, frantic with rage and mortification, immediately after this award wrote word to Napoleon that their deputies were setting out to appear before him;

but he answered that it was too late. In speaking of this event afterwards, Buonaparte gives himself great credit for the decision he had made. "The principles," he observes, "on which this sentence was founded echoed through all Europe, and aimed a mortal blow at the usurpation of the Swiss cantons, which held more than one people in subjection. It might have been expected that the aristocracy of Venice would have been sufficiently warned by this example, to feel that the moment for making some concessions to the enlightened state of the age, to the influence of France and to justice had arrived. But prejudice and pride never listen to the voice of reason, nature, or religion. An oligarchy yields to nothing but force." It may be asked here, was Napoleon sincere in these principles on which he seems to lay so much stress, and to which he often adhered so little in practice? There is no need to doubt it: every one is sincere in the condemnation of wrong, till it comes to be his own turn to inflict it.

The treaties with Rome, Naples, and Sardinia had been formally ratified in the course of these negotiations: but the materials of which they were composed were of too frail and discordant a nature to promise a lasting union. The Piedmontese in particular loudly called for a revolution, and the court of Turin already looked to Sardinia as a place of refuge. Rome vacillated and lost itself between contradictory and ill-judged counsels, keeping up the sense of self-importance after its authority was gone—too feeble to assert its claims, too obstinate to forego them. Naples, placed at a distance from the storm, might have escaped, but for the disorderly and violent passions of the queen, who ruled everything but herself. The treaty of peace in October, 1796, made no alteration in the conduct of this cabinet, which continued to levy troops and excite alarm during the whole of the year 1797; yet the treaty was an exceedingly favourable one. At the time that Napoleon was in the Marches threatening Rome, Prince Bel-

monte Pignatelli, the Neapolitan minister, who was at head-quarters, showed him in confidence a letter from the queen, informing him that she was about to order 30,000 men to march to the relief of Rome. "I thank you for this confidential communication," said the General, "and in return I will make you a similar one." He rang for his secretary, ordered him to bring the papers relating to Naples, took out a dispatch which he had written to the Directory in the month of November, 1796, before the taking of Mantua, and read as follows: "The difficulties arising from Alvinzi's approach would not prevent me from sending 6000 Lombards and Poles to punish the court of Rome; but as it is probable that the King of Naples might send 30,000 men to defend the Holy See, I shall not march on Rome, until Mantua shall have fallen, and the reinforcements you announce shall have arrived; in order that in case the court of Naples should violate the treaty of Paris, I might have 25,000 men disposable to occupy its capital and compel it to take refuge in Sicily." In the course of the night, Prince Pignatelli dispatched an extraordinary courier, doubtless for the purpose of informing the queen of the manner in which her insinuation had been received.

## CHAPTER XV.

## THE EIGHTEENTH OF FRUCTIDOR.

Internal state of France reviewed ; plot against the Directory detected, Gracchus Babeuf and the other conspirators seized ; desperate attempt of their partisans defeated ; trial and condemnation of Babeuf and Darthé ; royalist conspiracy ; Buonaparte's objections to the government of the Directory ; elections of the year 5 (May 1797) ; intrigues of the royalists ; Carnot joins the Clichy club ; attacks of the councils on the Directory ; Talleyrand comes into office ; addresses from the army against the royalists ; Augereau brings one from Buonaparte ; the Tuileries surrounded by an armed force ; arrest of Pichegru and others of the councils ; a conspiracy charged against them by the Directory ; numerous banishments ; Moreau denounces Pichegru by proclamation ; further proofs of his treachery ; Buonaparte dissatisfied with the sweeping measures of the Directory ; negotiations at Lisle for peace with England ; conferences broken off by the occurrences at Paris.

AFTER the battles and sieges, defeats and victories with which we have been lately occupied, it is with some reluctance I return to take up the internal affairs of the Revolution once more. In war one is only answerable for the event ; in politics one is concerned not only with what takes place, but with what ought to take place, and which seldom actually does so. In a campaign, the plan, the execution, the details, the success and alternate vicissitudes are everything, the merits of the case are for the moment laid aside ; in government, fortune and justice are constantly at issue, at every step our prejudices are shocked, our reason taken to task, our hopes disappointed or overturned. If in religion, where we have to conform our own actions to a certain standard, conscience is the great tormentor of the human breast : in philosophy, when we come to refine and speculate on what is best

for the whole, the moral sense is the great poisoner of reflection, and troubler of the peace and happiness of human life.

"At the time\* that the Directory were first installed in the Luxembourg," says M. Bailleul, "there was hardly a single article of furniture in it. In a small room, round a little broken table, one of the legs of which had given way from age, on which table they had deposited a quire of letter-paper, and a writing-desk *à calamet*, which luckily they had had the precaution to bring with them from the Committee of Public Safety, seated on four rush-bottomed chairs, in front of some logs of wood ill lighted, the whole borrowed from the porter Dupont; who would believe that it was in this deplorable condition that the members of the new government, after having examined all the difficulties, nay let me add, all the horrors of their situation, resolved to confront all obstacles, and that they would either deliver France from the abyss in which she was plunged, or perish in the attempt? They drew up on a sheet of letter-paper the act by which they declared themselves constituted, and immediately forwarded it to the Legislative Bodies."

The Directors divided the different functions amongst themselves according to their respective inclinations and the qualities for which they had been chosen. Rewbell, a man of business and of great activity of mind and body, undertook the departments of finance, justice, and foreign affairs. Barras, indolent, with few resources, but bold, intriguing, and well acquainted or connected with all parties, with the nobles by birth, with the revolutionists by habit, had the management of the police. He also did the honours of the Directory, and held a kind of court (not the most respectable) at the Luxembourg. The modest and well-meaning Lepaux took charge of the arts, manufactures, and public instruction. Carnot

\* October 27, 1795.

was appointed to the war department, in which he introduced great improvements, and met with great success; and Letourneur superintended the marine and the colonies. Thus all parties laboured, each in his province, and with a perfect good understanding, to benefit and restore the State. They had quite enough on their hands. An alarming scarcity prevailed in Paris; and it was necessary to resort to extraordinary measures to avert the calamities of absolute famine; but at the end of a month this difficulty had been so far overcome that the capital was supplied with provisions by the ordinary channels. The finances were in a deplorable state: there was no money in the public treasury, so that even the couriers were sometimes stopped for want of the trifling sum necessary to pay their expenses on the road. The Convention had supplied the armies and the people with bread by means of requisitions and the *maximum*; but when this forced system came to an end, things fell into a worse state than ever. The paper money was totally depreciated, so as to be quite worthless; nobody could sell, for nobody could buy, and commerce and industry were almost at a stand for want of credit. The Directory at first attempted to remedy this distress by a forced loan, and by a new issue of paper money, secured on the sale of the national domains, but with very little success. By degrees, however, affairs began to wear a better aspect. The fever and the violence of the Revolution being over, the intense activity it had called forth seemed to turn to the benefit of the State. A great number of the people quitted the clubs and public places to return to the fields or to their workshops: and it was at this period that the advantages of a change of government which had destroyed exclusive corporations, parcelled out the land, abolished vexatious privileges, and augmented the means of civilization, were strikingly felt. The Directory seconded this favourable tendency by salutary measures. It established public prizes for industry and

improved upon the system of education decreed by the Convention. The National Institute, and the primary and central schools were so many nurseries and shrines of arts and science and of republican sentiments. A mild and benevolent tone pervaded their addresses to the nation, which must have done much to inspire confidence and to conciliate good will. "All will be well," they said in one of these, "when by your zeal and steadiness that sincere love of freedom, which consecrated the dawn of the Revolution, shall return to animate the breasts of all Frenchmen. The colours of liberty waving over your houses, the republican device inscribed on your doors, undoubtedly present a sight sufficiently interesting. Do not rest contented with this; hasten the day when the sacred name of the Republic shall be voluntarily engraven in all hearts." The Director, Réveillère-Lepaux, as entrusted with the moral administration of the government, wished to found the sect of Theo-philanthropists, which soon fell into contempt and disuse, as equally opposed to the prejudices of the Catholics and the sceptical opinions of the philosophers. All attempts at compromise or holding the balance between extreme and hostile sects and parties necessarily meet with the same fate. The only way to succeed is either to strengthen power and opinion, or to overturn it. Every middle course is fallacious.

The situation of the armies was by no means brilliant. Insubordination prevailed among the troops; defection among the generals. That of Pichegru had been nearly fatal to the Republic, though all its circumstances were not as yet known. The Directory found the frontier of the Rhine uncovered, the war rekindled in La Vendée; and Holland menaced with a descent from England; and lastly, the army of Italy, in want of everything, was reduced to the defensive under Scherer and Kellerman. Hoche succeeded in pacifying La Vendée; and Buonaparte, appointed through the interest of Barras and Carnot

to the command of the army of Italy in the following spring (1796), repaired every disaster, and gave to France an arm of steel.

It was thus that the Directory contended at the commencement of its career with the difficulties it had to overcome as to its internal administration and foreign hostilities. It had yet another enemy to encounter, which was faction, and this was composed of the two extremes of republicanism and royalism. The democrats, uneasy under the new government from which they were excluded and which did not give sufficient scope to the violence of their opinions and passions, still regretted the death of Robespierre and the termination of the reign of terror as of evil augury. Not being able to take their full swing, and give every wild thought its instant effect, they considered themselves as "cooped, confined, and cabined in" by narrow forms and legal sophisms. They held a club at the Pantheon, which the Directory tolerated for some time, and of which Gracchus Babeuf was at the head, who called himself the "Tribune of the People." He appears to have been a decided political fanatic, an honest but misled man, with considerable influence over his immediate associates, for all enthusiasm is infectious; or rather perhaps there is a certain sort of minds that are always inoculated with it and ready to break out. His conspiracy furnishes a striking example among so many others of the manner in which, with persons of this sanguine and self-opinionated cast, the strength of the imagination and passions predominates over sense and reason, and makes them firmly persuaded they have only to grasp at the most extravagant chimeras in order to convert them into triumphant realities. Their brains are heated by their internal impressions, which they mistake for external power and a certainty of success. All reformers, all speculative reasoners, it is to be observed, belong to the class of those in whom imagination or the belief and hope of *what is not* bears sway over *what is*, and are more or less tinged with this



weakness. The honestest among them are not the least so; though, on the other hand, it is true that men of much speculative refinement in general are not inclined to action, and for the most part confine their extravagance and credulity to words and theories, with which they would have others as well satisfied as they are. It is men of coarser minds and more bustling habits, who, when suddenly inspired and intoxicated with some new and dazzling light, cannot be restrained by any consideration of prudence from putting their theories into practice, and rush blindfold upon destruction.

Babœuf was one of the latter class; he prepared the way, as he said in a sort of journal that he set up, for *the reign of the common good*. The Society of the Pantheon became more numerous from day to day, as well as more alarming to the Directory, who strove at first to circumscribe it within certain bounds. But presently the sittings were prolonged into the night; the democrats met together armed, and talked of nothing less than marching against the Directory and the Councils. On this the Directory shut up their place of meeting in February 1796, and apprised the legislative body by a message of the step they had taken. The party, thus deprived of their place of rendezvous, had recourse to other expedients; they gained over the soldiers of the *Legion of Police*, who were disarmed in consequence by the government. They next formed an *Insurrectionary Committee of Public Safety*, which was in intelligence with the lowest of the Parisian rabble. Besides Babœuf, among the members of this committee, were Vadier, Amar, Choudieu, Ricord, Drouet, who belonged to the violent party in the Convention, with the former generals of the decemviral committee, Rossignol, Parrein, Fyon, Lami. A number of displaced officers, patriots driven from the Departments, and the old leaven of the Jacobin Club, formed the strength of this faction. Its chiefs often met at a place which they called the *Temple of Reason*: here they

chaunted their lamentations over the fall of Robespierre, and deplored the servitude of the people. They wanted to establish an understanding with the troops of the camp of Grenelle; and with this view admitted among them a captain belonging to the camp, of the name of Grisel, of whom they thought themselves sure, and concerted the mode of attack with him. Their plan was arranged for purging the commonwealth: it consisted in a community of goods, the calling a Convention composed of sixty-eight surviving members of the old Mountain, with the addition of a pure republican from each department: the motto of one of their flags was to be, *Those who usurp the sovereignty ought to be put to death by free men*; everything was ready, the proclamations printed, the day fixed, when they were betrayed by Grisel, as it commonly happens in the greater number of such conspiracies.

On the 21st of Floreal (May 1796), the evening before this scheme was to be put in execution, the conspirators were seized in their place of rendezvous. The plan and all the proofs of the conspiracy were found on Babœuf. Considerable alarm was excited by the discovery of the plot. Babœuf, though a prisoner, had the hardihood to propose terms of accommodation to the Directory; and that dismissing him as the chief of a rival faction, they should declare that there had been no conspiracy. The Directory published his letter and sent his accomplices before the high court of Vendôme. Their partisans made one more desperate attempt. In the middle of the night of the 23rd of Fructidor they marched in a body of 600 or 700 men, armed with sabres and pistols, against the Directory; but they were stopped by the guard. They then turned their steps to the camp at Grenelle, which they hoped to gain over in consequence of an understanding they still kept up there. The camp was asleep when they arrived. To the challenge of the sentinels, they replied *Long live the Republic and the Constitution of '93!* The

sentinels at this immediately gave the alarm. The assailants, reckoning on the assistance of a battalion which had been displaced, proceeded to the tent of the commandant Malo, who sounded the charge, and made his dragoons mount half-naked on horseback. The conspirators, not prepared for such a reception, made but a feeble resistance: they were sabred by the dragoons and put to flight, after leaving a great number of dead as well as prisoners on the field of battle. This unsuccessful attempt was the death-blow of the party. Besides their loss at the time, a military commission condemned thirty-one of the insurgents to death, thirty more to transportation, and twenty-five to imprisonment.

Shortly after the high court of Vendôme tried Babœuf and his accomplices, among whom were Amar, Vadier, and Darthé, formerly secretary to Joseph Lebon. They did not belie their pretensions, neither the one nor the other; but spoke as men who neither feared to avow their purpose nor to die in defence of their cause. At the commencement and at the end of each examination they struck up the *Marseillois*. This well-known song of victory, with their steadfast countenance, filled the spectators with awe, and seemed to render them still formidable. Their wives were present in the court. Babœuf, in closing his defence, turned towards them, and said that "they should accompany them even to Calvary, since there was nothing in the cause for which they suffered to make them blush." Babœuf and Darthé were condemned to death; and on hearing their sentence stabbed themselves. There is something truly affecting in this scene, and it is highly characteristic of the spirit that prevailed in the French Revolution. It shows in the midst of errors, of crimes and anguish, that ardent zeal for liberty and truth which nothing but death could damp or extinguish; which burnt like a flame on the altar of their country and ascended in loud hosannas with their latest breath, proclaiming peace on earth, good-will

to men. Be it that liberty and truth are but a dream, that men mistake both the means and the end; yet the belief in good and a willingness to die for it will not remain a less proud distinction of those who cherish this "fine madness" as their ruling passion and their final hope, and should preserve their names alike from oblivion and from the tooth of calumny! In the interval between the attack on Grenelle and the condemnation of Babœuf, the royalists also had their conspiracy. The secret movers of this party hoped (for they too were credulous like all who have strong passions in which they have been disappointed) to find auxiliaries in the troops of the camp of Grenelle, who had repulsed the Babœuf faction. On this idle presumption they employed three men without influence and without name, the Abbé Brothier, an advocate in the old parliament, Lavilheurnois, and a sort of adventurer, one Dunan, to go to the chief commander Malo, and request him simply to give them up the camp of Grenelle, and thus enable them to bring back the ancient *régime*. Malo informed the Directory of their application, who delivered them over to the civil tribunals; where, under the influence of the counter-revolutionary spirit which at this time was the fashion, they were treated with great lenity and escaped with a short imprisonment as their only punishment. These men were martyrs and confessors in their way; yet I cannot bring myself to write their panegyric. Romantic generosity suits but ill with servility of spirit; and he who shows himself a hero in order to become a slave or make others so, can hope for little disinterested sympathy. There is a want of keeping and of consequent effect.

Buonaparte severely criticises the government of the Directory; and this is but natural in him, as he must wish to find reasons for having finally stripped them of their authority. The Republican calendar had divided the year into twelve equal months of thirty days, and the months into *décades*; Sunday was abolished, and the *décadi*, or tenth day, had been

appointed as the day of rest. The Directory, not satisfied with this idle and fanciful measure, went, he says, still farther, and prohibited the people under regular penalties from working on the *décadi* and from resting on the Sunday, employing the peace-officers, *gensdarmes*, and others, to enforce the execution of these absurd regulations. The people were thus tormented and exposed to persecution and vexation for matters with which the state had nothing to do, and all this in the name of liberty and the rights of man. Nothing renders a government unpopular or excites hatred and contempt sooner than a disposition to interfere in trifles, and without any reason but the itch of governing. The new system of weights and measures was another grievance complained of. The want of uniformity in French weights and measures was an inconvenience that had been long felt; and it was expected among other things that the Revolution would have corrected this evil. The remedy was in fact simple and at hand; it was to render the system of weights and measures used in the city of Paris, and which had been also employed by the government and artists for centuries, common throughout all the provinces. Instead of this, the government, who at that time did every thing upon a grand scale of abstraction, consulted the algebraists and geometricians upon a question of practical utility, who soon hit upon a system which neither agreed with the regulations of the public administration, with the tables of dimensions used in all arts, nor with those of any of the existing machines. Nor would other nations have agreed to this, which was meant to be an universal benefit to the world. What would the English, for instance, have said to it? The new system not only was at variance with common sense and custom, and required all the calculations of the arts and sciences to be reversed, but was in itself impracticable and unintelligible. It converted the commonest affairs of life into an abstruse mathematical calculation. Thus a soldier's ration is expressed by twenty-four ounces in the old nomen-

clature; this is a very simple process; but when translated into the new one, it becomes seven hundred and thirty-four grammes and two hundred and fifty-nine thousandths. All the dimensions and lines that compose architectural works, all the tools and measures used in clock making, jewellery, paper making, and the other mechanic arts, had been invented and calculated according to the ancient nomenclature, and were expressed by simple numbers, which must now be represented by five or six figures. Another disadvantage was, that the *savans* introduced Greek roots, which farther multiplied difficulties; for these denominations, though they might be useful to the learned, only perplexed the common people. But the Directory made the weights and measures one of the principal affairs of government. Instead of leaving it to time to work the change, and merely encouraging the new system by the power of example and fashion, they made compulsory laws, and had them rigorously executed. Merchants and artisans found themselves harassed about matters in themselves indifferent; and this increased the unpopularity of a government which placed itself above the wants and the reach of the people, infringing on their habits and usages with all the violence that might be expected from a Tartar conqueror. It is always bad policy in a government to meddle more than it can help with the concerns of private life, which individuals understand so much better than mere theorists, thus subjecting itself at once to the charge of meanness and incapacity.

Another thing which gave no small degree of umbrage, was the favour shown to the sect of Theophilanthropists and the discountenancing of the Catholic priests. Many were hurt and scandalised at this preference, which in some cases took the shape of intolerance. The Directory had all voted for the death of the King. It was therefore thought they would favour such of their colleagues in the Convention as had been re-elected to the Councils. But the contrary was the case. The title of a *Con-*

*ventional* had become a term of reproach; and the Directory, by shunning all intercourse with them, sought to avoid the disgrace that might be reflected back upon themselves. The men of 1793 were at first disposed to attach themselves to the new order of things, but were repelled and chilled by a number of ungracious acts; and being driven to extremities, they conspired together to deliver themselves from the yoke of the *Five Gentlemen of the Luxembourg*, as the Directors were called in derision. On the other hand, the government affected to gain partisans in the privileged classes, but, as might be expected, without success. These could feel little respect for persons who had not the advantages of birth and rank on their side, who had not distinguished themselves by any signal services, and who, with the exception of Carnot, were not men of very decided or prominent character. There is something fluttering and unsteady in the French character, which must either be awed by fear, or shackled by prejudice, or dazzled by success. The Directory were placed at the head of the government on none of these grounds, but merely because being men of good intentions and of active habits they maintained the tranquillity and equipoise of the Republic—the very reason which induced the plotting and restless spirits who could not live without violence and change to wish to get rid of them. In this manner the two extreme parties were brought forward again; the Republicans from being discountenanced, the privileged classes from being courted. The Jacobins had tried their fortune, and had been foiled. It was now the turn of the Royalists.

The elections of the year 5 (May 1797) were favourable to this party. They had possessed a minority of some consequence in the preceding legislative bodies, having at its head such men as Barbé-Marbois, Pastoret, Dumas, Portalis, Simeon, Vau-blanc, Tronçon-Ducoudray, Dupont de Nemours, and others; but they waited for the succour they expected

from the new third (the choice of which they influenced by every method of intimidation and intrigue) before they commenced an open attack on the government. From the first opening of the new Chambers, the spirit which animated them was pretty evident. Pichegru, who was called by his party the French General Monk, was elected president of the Council of Five Hundred; and Barbé-Marbois with the same intention president of the Council of Ancients. The legislative body then proceeded to the nomination of a Director to replace Letourneur, who went out by rote, and the choice fell upon Barthelemy, ambassador to Switzerland; whose views coincided with those of the party who, now that the Revolution had done all the mischief, wished to prevent all the good it might do, and to heal the wounds of their country by throwing themselves with insane gratitude and fawning submission into the arms of those who had deliberately caused them. This strange and voluntary bias of a large proportion of a people to return to a slavery that had bowed them down for centuries, and to escape from which had cost oceans of blood and indignities unparalleled, is one of those phenomena in the history of modern times, which would be wholly unaccountable but for the fascination and despotism which power in the abstract (and the older and more corrupt the more it is an object of veneration) exercises over the imaginations of the thoughtless, the cowardly, and the selfish, who feel pride only in having a master, ease and security, in chains!

This band of parasites and renegades proceeded systematically and artfully to their end. They reproached the Directory with the continuance of the war, as if the foreign cabinets only waited a nod from them to put an end to it; with the disorder of the finances, as if regularity and neatness were the properties of a volcano; they insisted on the unrestrained liberty of the press, in order that venal journalists might strike at the root of all liberty, and invoke



tyranny as their tutelary saint ; they recommended peace, as a preliminary step to disarming the Republic, economy as a means of crippling her armies. The nation, willing to listen to reason and too ready to trust to fair appearances, shared in these professed demands, but not in their secret intention. They longed for peace, but not to purchase it at the expense of all the objects for which they had contended, and which they had obtained. They had repelled the Bourbons by force of arms, and by efforts of heroic courage ; they did not wish tamely, from mere mental cowardice and in a fit of mawkish sentimentality (won over by elegiac strains or high-flown rhapsodies) to bow their necks to the yoke of the vanquished. They had been provoked by foreign aggression and internal discord to commit acts of violence and outrage, and had been condemned to endure and inflict much evil in the arduous struggle ; but they did not choose to set the seal to their own infamy, and by not only disowning the excesses, but by abandoning the principles of the Revolution, to give those all the credit and the triumph of this dereliction of common sense and natural feeling, who had, by making war on its principles, given rise to its excesses, and had constantly fomented the calamities of the country in order to lead to such a deplorable relapse. They might wish to forget their sufferings and wipe out the stain of their errors or their passions, but they would best do this by making a good use of the advantages they had gained, and by consolidating the elements of freedom, which had hitherto stood the shock of all opposition, and not by running from the extremes of licentiousness into those of servility, thus leaving themselves without a shadow of excuse in the strength of their attachment to the principles of liberty, and showing that their loyalty was equally a sudden mechanical impulse, the whim of the moment, without object or consistency. They would thus indeed deservedly become the bye-word of Europe, and would earn the insulting appellation of *half-tiger, half-*

*monkey*, which had been set upon them. If they had in moments of frenzy outraged humanity, that was no reason why they should deliberately betray it. They would in that case have more reason to blush for the tardy reparation than for the original wrong. They did not wish the priests to be imprisoned or banished in a body, on the ground of their religion, or on mere suspicion of disaffection; but neither did it seem equitable that under pretence of liberality and toleration, they should have exclusive distinctions granted them, or be exempted from the common oath of allegiance to the state, that so they might preach sedition with impunity, sow the seeds of dissension and massacres, and when they themselves became the sufferers by the hostility they had provoked, turn with pleading hands and a countenance of meek, injured innocence, to the patrons of religion and social order, and help to scatter firebrands and kindle a Holy War throughout Europe! Carnot, one of the firmest and most upright characters of the Revolution, was led away by this change in opinion, and being uneasy at the reproaches cast upon him as a member of the Committee of Public Safety, was willing to efface the recollection by associating himself with the *preux chevaliers* or equivocal patriots, who met at the Clichy Club. This was a weakness; but his subsequent conduct proved, that though he sought to escape odium and have the good word of this knot of intriguers and busybodies, he did not at all enter into their views or principles. Or he might tamper with the proposals and allurements of power when he saw no prospect of their being realized, which, when it came to the push and his country was in danger, he resisted with all his might. Such persons may be said to repent *before the fact* of their desertion of principle, as others of weaker minds do *after it*, when it is too late. Camille-Jourdan, the deputy from Lyon, a young man of considerable eloquence and spirit, but vain and extravagant, distinguished himself by a pompous panegyric on the

refractory clergy, and by a proposal to restore the use of bells as peculiar to the Catholic worship. There is in this a common reaction of opinion, by means of which, as new fashions become old and the old ones new, so the petulance and egotism of the young and giddy are piqued in affecting a superiority to the prevailing tone and established maxims, and antiquated prejudices and exploded mummery are revived as brilliant and adventurous paradoxes, which show a manly and independent way of thinking. Thus Chateaubriand afterwards published an eulogy on Christianity, not out of conviction, but thinking it would strike as a singularity, for I cannot help supposing there was a vast difference between his belief in Christianity and Fenelon's; and borrowed from Sir Robert Filmer the old story of passive obedience and non-resistance, which he gave out as a startling light and compunctious visitation of his own conscience. Camille-Jourdan's first and lively sally in this retrograde path of philosophical discovery did not meet with the same success. *His* quackery was not backed by five hundred thousand bayonets. He got himself the nickname of *Jourdan Carillon* (Jourdan of the Chimes). His motion to render the priests independent of the state and of all political obligations, was negatived in the Council of Five Hundred, who sanctioned the civic oath with acclamations of *Vive la Republique!*

Everything seemed to announce a crisis. The refractory priests and emigrants returned in crowds. Reprisals were common in the departments against the most noted revolutionists and the holders of the national domains. The attacks of the Councils on the Directory became more frequent and undisguised, which, however, lost them the confidence of the mass of the people, who were not disposed to any serious change. The army joined enthusiastically in expressing their sentiments of fidelity; and the Government made Hoche advance with several regiments of the army of the Sambre and Meuse near Paris, passing

the constitutional barrier—a violation of the law of which the Councils complained loudly, and of which the Directory excused themselves by pretending ignorance. Carnot in vain attempted a reconciliation between the two opposite parties. He had attached himself to Barthelemy, with whom he formed a minority in the Directory against Barras, Rewbell, and La Réveillère. These were inclined to try a *coup d'état* against the Councils, while Carnot (through a timidity the result of previous over-daring) was bent upon adhering to the letter of the law. The Councils next endeavoured to introduce their party into the Government by proposing a change of ministry; but instead of attending to their recommendation, the Directory displaced only those whom they wished to keep in, and Benezech was succeeded by François de Neufchâteau as Minister of the Interior, Petiet by Hoche and soon after by Sherer as Minister at War, and Cochon del'Apparent by Lenoir Laroche, and Laroche by Sotin as Minister of Police. Talleyrand also crept into the bosom of the Government on this occasion, which he afterwards stung to death. The struggle drew nearer and nearer, and the Directory were anxious not to put it off till another year, when the new elections would in all probability have decided its fate and that of the Republic. They encouraged violent addresses against the Legislative Body from the armies. Augereau brought that from the army of Italy by Buonaparte's desire, and had the 18th of Fructidor turned out differently, he himself was prepared to follow with 15,000 men, expel the royalists, and place himself at the head of the popular party. This address ran thus:—"Tremble, royalists! From the Adige to the Seine there is but one step. Tremble! Your iniquities are counted, and you will find that their reward is at the end of our bayonets." "It is with indignation," said the address of the *état-major*, "that we have seen the cause of liberty menaced by the intrigues of royalists. We have sworn, by the manes of the heroes who have

died for their country, implacable enmity to royalists and royalty. Such are our sentiments, such are yours" (to the Directory), "such are those of all good patriots. Let the royalists show themselves, and they will have ceased to live!" The Councils remonstrated, but to no purpose, against the interference of the army. General Richepanse, who commanded the troops that had arrived from the frontier, stationed them at Versailles, Meudon, and Vincennes.

The Councils meantime increased the powers of the Commission of Inspectors of the Halles, to which Willot and Pichegru belonged. On the 17th of Fructidor the Legislative Body voted the formation of a National Guard and the removal of the regular troops; and the following day Willot proposed that if these measures were not complied with, they should decree the arrest of Barras, Rewbell, and La Réveillère, march against the Directory with Pichegru at their head, and overturn the Government. It is said that Pichegru hesitated, and thus lost the game he had been so long playing for. This was not the case with the Directory. They determined to aim an instant blow at Carnot, Barthelemy, and the majority of the Legislature. The morning of the following day (September 4th) was fixed upon for the execution of their plan. During the night the troops encamped round Paris entered the city, under the command of Augereau. The intention of the triumvirate was to make the soldiers occupy the Tuileries before the meeting of the Legislative Body, in order to avoid the scandal of a violent expulsion; to convoke the Councils in the neighbourhood of the Luxembourg, after having arrested their principal agitators, and to accomplish, by an official measure, what had been begun by force. They were in intelligence with the Minority of the Councils, and hoped for the approbation of the masses. At one in the morning the troops arrived at the Hôtel de Ville, and dispersed themselves along the quays, on the bridges, in the Champs Elysées, and shortly 12,000 men and forty

pieces of cannon surrounded the Tuileries. At four o'clock the alarm-gun was fired; and General Augereau presented himself at the grate of the Pont-Tournant.

The guard of the Legislative body was under arms. The Inspectors of the Halles, apprised overnight of the intended movement, had gone to the Tuileries to block up the entrance. Ramel, the Commander of the Guard, was devoted to the Councils, and had placed his eight hundred grenadiers in the various avenues of the garden, which was closed by iron gates. But it was not with so small and uncertain a force that Pichegru, Willot, and Ramel could offer an effectual resistance to the Directory. Augereau had not even occasion to force the passage of the Pont-Tournant; he was no sooner in sight of the grenadiers than he called out to them, "Are you Republicans?" and these, lowering their arms, replied, "*Long live Augereau! Long live the Directory!*"—and immediately joined him. Augereau then crossed the Garden of the Tuileries, reached the Hall of the Councils, arrested Pichegru, Willot, Ramel, all the Inspectors, and had them conveyed to the Temple. The members of the Councils, called together in haste, repaired in crowds to the place of their sittings, but were arrested or conducted back by the armed force. Augereau informed them that the Directory, urged by the necessity of defending the Republic against conspirators sitting in the midst of them, had designated the Odéon and the School of Medicine as the places of their meeting. The greater number of the deputies present exclaimed against military violence and the usurpation of the Directory; but they were compelled to yield.

At six in the morning the enterprise was completed. The Parisians, when they awoke, found the troops still under arms, and the walls placarded with proclamations which announced the detection of a formidable conspiracy. The people were invited to maintain order and tranquillity. As soon as the

Councils were assembled at the Odéon and the School of Medicine in sufficient numbers to deliberate, they declared themselves permanent. A message from the Directory acquainted them with the motives of the steps it had just taken. It was to this effect: "Citizen Legislators, if the Directory had waited a day longer, the Republic would have been delivered up into the power of its enemies. The very place of your sittings was the point of communication between the conspirators; it was from thence that they distributed money and tickets for the delivery of arms; it is from thence that they corresponded during this night with their accomplices; it is from thence, or in the neighbourhood, that they yet strive to collect seditious and clandestine assemblages of their partisans, which the police are at this moment employed in dispersing. It would have been to compromise the public safety and that of the Deputies who continued faithful to their trust, to have suffered them to remain confounded with the enemies of the country in a den of conspirators." A commission, composed of Siéyes, Poulain-Grandpré, Villars, Chazal, and Boulay de la Meurthe, was ordered by the Council of Five Hundred to present a law of public safety on the occasion. By this law two of the Directors were sentenced to banishment, with fifty-two Deputies, and one hundred and forty-eight private individuals, journalists and others; the elections of several departments were annulled, new measures of public security were decreed, the nomination of Carnot and Barthelemy to the Executive Directory was set aside, and they were replaced by Merlin and François de Neufchâteau. Most of those who were included in this sweeping condemnation were sent to Cayenne, but several went no further than the Isle of Rhé. Carnot, who had warning given him the night preceding, escaped to Geneva. Thus the scheme of the Royalist party was defeated by a vigour beyond the law, but scarcely beyond the occasion. The plan, at least of those who were in the true secret of the plot, had been to dis-

credit and weaken the Directory, to fill it with their creatures, and then to proclaim a counter-revolution, as the only remedy for the calamities which afflicted the country. Buonaparte finds fault with the severity and precipitation used by the Directory at this juncture, and their conduct appears in some instances to have been rash and ill-judged. They would not, or could not, discriminate between accidental aberrations and rooted hostility and lukewarmness. He himself afterwards tried the opposite scheme of forbearance and lenity, and composed an administration of neutrals and reclaimed renegadoes. The event was answerable ; for by giving power to your adversaries, you do not make them your friends ; nor do personal favours alter the sentiments of individuals, except by corrupting their principles, which is a bad ground of confidence and attachment.

The public was at first equally astonished and incredulous as to the measures of the 18th and 19th of Fructidor. It was suspected that D'Entraigues's papers and Duverne's discoveries (the evidence to which the Directory had hitherto appealed) were forged ; but all doubt ceased and men's minds were satisfied when the following proclamation appeared, addressed by Moreau to his army, and dated from his head-quarters at Strasburg, 23rd of Fructidor (September 9, 1797) :—"Soldiers, I have this instant received the proclamation of the Executive Directory, dated the 18th of this month, informing France that Pichegru has rendered himself unworthy of the confidence with which he has so long inspired the whole Republic and the armies in particular. I have also been informed that several military men, too confident in the patriotism of that representative, and considering the services he had rendered to the state, doubted this assertion. I owe it to my brethren in arms and fellow citizens to declare the truth. It is but too true that Pichegru has betrayed the confidence of all France. On the 17th of this month I informed one of the members of the Directory that a corres-



pondence with Condé and other agents of the Pretender had fallen into my hands, which left no doubt of these treasonable acts. The Directory has summoned me to Paris, requiring, no doubt, more complete information respecting this correspondence. Soldiers, be calm, and dismiss all anxiety respecting the state of affairs at home ; depend upon it that the Government will keep down the royalists, and vigilantly maintain the republican constitution which you have sworn to defend."

On the 24th (September 10) Moreau wrote as follows to the Directory :—" I did not receive your order to set out for Paris till a very late hour on the 22nd, when I was ten leagues from Strasburg. Some hours were necessary for me to make arrangements for my departure, to secure the tranquillity of the army, and to apprehend several persons compromised in an interesting correspondence which I shall myself deliver to you. I send you subjoined a proclamation which I have issued, which has had the effect of convincing many incredulous persons ; and I confess I find it difficult to believe that a man who had done his country such important services, and had no interest in betraying it, could have been guilty of such infamous conduct. I was thought to be a friend of Pichegru ; but I have long ceased to esteem him. You will see that no one was in greater danger than myself, for the whole scheme was founded on the expected reverses of the army which I commanded : its courage has saved the Republic."

There is an extremely conscious exculpatory tone in all this, which, coupled with subsequent transactions and the tardy exposure of Pichegru's plot, throws a very suspicious light on Moreau's character and intentions even at this early period. The letter which he alludes to as having been addressed to Barthelemy (a very safe depositary for such a letter in case the plan had not been defeated) was as follows : " Citizen Director—You will recollect, no doubt, that on my last

visit to Bâle, I informed you that at the passage of the Rhine we took a wagon from General Kinglin, containing two or three hundred letters of his correspondence; those of Witterbach formed part of them, but were the least important. Many of these letters are in cypher, but we have found out the key to them: the whole are now decyphering, which occupies much time. No person is called by his real name in these letters, so that many Frenchmen who are in correspondence with Kinglin, Condé, Wickham, D'Enghien, and others, are not easily discovered. We have nevertheless such indications, that several are already known. I had determined not to give publicity to this correspondence, since, as peace might be presumed at hand, there seemed to be no danger to the Republic: besides, these papers could have afforded proofs against but few persons, as no one is named in them. But seeing at the head of the parties which are now doing so much mischief to our country, and in possession of an eminent situation of the highest confidence, a man deeply implicated in this correspondence and intended to act an important part in the recal of the Pretender (the object to which it relates), I have thought it my duty to apprise you of the circumstance, that you may not be duped by his pretended republicanism; that you may watch over his proceedings, and oppose his fatal projects against our country, since nothing but a civil war can be the object of his schemes. I confess, Citizen Director, that it is with deep regret that I inform you of this treason, and the more so, because the man I denounce to you was once my friend, and would certainly have continued so still, had I not detected him. I speak of the representative of the people, Pichegru. He has been too prudent to commit anything to writing; he only communicated verbally with those who were entrusted with this correspondence, who carried his proposals and received his answers. He is designated under several names, that of Baptiste among others. A

Brigadier-General, named Badouville, was attached to him, and is mentioned by the name of *Coco*. He was one of the couriers whom Pichegru and the other correspondents employed; you must have seen him frequently at Bâle. Their grand movement was to have taken place at the beginning of the campaign of the year IV. They reckoned on the probable occurrence of some disasters on my taking the command of the army; which, as they expected, discontented at its defeat, would call for its old commander, who in that case was to have acted according to circumstances and the instructions he would have received. He was to have 900 louis-d'ors for the journey which he took to Paris at the time of his dismissal; which accounts in a natural way for his refusing the Swedish embassy. I suspect the Lajolais family of being concerned in this plot. The confidence which I have in your patriotism and prudence alone determined me to give you this intelligence. The proofs are as clear as day; but I doubt whether they are judicial. I intreat you, Citizen Director, to have the goodness to assist me with your advice on this perplexing occasion. You know me well enough to conceive how dear this disclosure costs me; nothing less than the danger which threatened my country could have induced me to make it. The secret is confined to five persons; General Desaix, General Regnier, one of my aides-de-camp, and an officer engaged in the secret service of the army, who is constantly employed in pursuing the clue of information afforded by the decyphered letters."

The letters found in Kinglin's wagon were soon after published; proofs of Pichegru's treachery came pouring in from all sides; and he became the object of general detestation. When Napoleon heard of the result of the 18th of Fructidor, he expressed great dissatisfaction with the conduct of the Directory. They had included in the same unsparing proscription persons who were concerned in plotting the destruc-

tion of the Republic, and who were known to be in correspondence with its enemies, and those of whose guilt there was either no proof, or who were in the main, notwithstanding any minor differences of opinion or momentary disgusts, among its staunchest and warmest friends. He would have had Pichegru, Willot, Imbert Colomés, and two or three more of that stamp, brought to trial, and condemned to expiate on the scaffold the crimes which they had committed, and of which Government possessed the proofs; and he would have had those who were suspected to have listened to or not revealed their intrigues, deprived of their functions and placed under inspection in the interior, as a measure of necessary precaution; but here he would have stopped. He was shocked to see men of great talents, who had done much for the Revolution, and of whose defection there was no proof but conjecture or hearsay, condemned to perish, without trial or evidence, in the marshes of Sinnamari. So far he was right in this discrimination of classes and degree of delinquency, and in making some entire exceptions; but whether he was right in calling the most dissatisfied and lukewarm of this band of negative patriots to some of the chief offices of the state afterwards, is a question that admits of great doubt, and the measure was hardly justified by the event.

In October 1796, the English Government had consented to treat for peace with the French Republic, and sent Lord Malmesbury over to Paris for that purpose; but the cession of Belgium to Austria was a stumbling-block in the way, and the negotiations were broken off. It was on this occasion that Mr. Burke wrote his celebrated pamphlet against a *Regicide Peace*. The preliminary treaty of Leoben, by which the Emperor relinquished Belgium, induced the English to renew the proposal, and Lord Malmesbury repaired to Lisle. A favourable issue was expected, and a treaty was on the point of being concluded on terms more advantageous to France than those of the

peace of Amiens, when the events of the 18th of Fructidor taking place, the Directory, elated with success, raised their demands; the conferences were broken off; and Lord Malmesbury wrote over from London to say that the English Cabinet would send no more plenipotentiaries till it was better convinced of the sincerity of the French Government, or of the stability and reasonableness of its views and engagements.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## BUONAPARTE'S RETURN TO PARIS IN 1797.

Buonaparte returns to Paris ; his address to the Directory ; Madame de Staël and Napoleon ; accepts the command of the army of England ; his differences with the Directory ; imprudent interference with Switzerland ; hostility of the Court of Rome ; Berthier enters that city, and establishes a republic ; Bernadotte insulted at Vienna ; Napoleon opposes a declaration of war against the emperor, who finally gives satisfaction ; Napoleon hesitates to head the expedition to Egypt ; celebration of the death of Louis XVI. ; arguments between Napoleon and the ministry on the subject ; treatment of Sir Sidney Smith in the Temple.

NAPOLÉON, during the two years of his campaigns in Italy, had filled all Europe with the renown of his arms, which gave the first stunning blow to the Coalition. Fame, after having slept a thousand years, seemed to have seized her ancient trump ; and, as in the early periods of Greece and Rome, freedom smiled on victory. Those who ever felt that dawn of a brighter day, that spring-time of hope and glow of exultation, animate their breasts, cannot easily be taught to forget it, either in the dazzling light or cheerless gloom that was to succeed it. But it is perhaps enough for great actions to *have been*, and still to be remembered when they have ceased to be ; and thus to stir the mind in after-ages with mingled awe, admiration and regret.

On Napoleon's arrival in Paris, the leaders of the different parties were eager to call upon him, and to make him different offers, to which he paid little seeming attention. The streets and squares through which he was expected to pass were constantly crowded with people, curious to see the gainer of so many battles, who but seldom showed himself. The Insti-

tute having chosen him one of its members, he adopted its costume. He had no regular visitors, except a few men of science, such as Monge, Berthollet, Borda, Laplace, Prony, and Lagrange; Generals Berthier, Desaix, Lefebvre, Caffarelli Dufalga, Kleber, and a very few deputies. He had a public audience given him by the Directory, who had scaffoldings erected in the Place du Luxembourg for the ceremony, the ostensible reason for which was the delivery of the treaty of Campo-Formio.\* In his

\* On his arrival at Paris, after the first Italian campaign, he shunned every opportunity of being noticed: he lived in a small house and retired street; he received very little company; he avoided all crowded places, and never went out but in a plain carriage with two horses; he dined sometimes with the different ministers of state, and never appeared but twice at any public meeting; in doing this he complied with his natural disposition. He always detested the voice of applause, and avoided giving offence to the Directory.

The ceremony of his presentation to the Directory, which took place immediately after his arrival from Italy, was attended with every degree of splendour and parade. They were about to receive a general who, by his prowess and talents, had vanquished the most formidable armies ever sent into the field against France; and who had preserved the independence and extended the power of the country against a confederacy formed for the utter destruction of its glory.

The great court of the Luxembourg was the place chosen for this superb spectacle; it was covered with an immense awning, and the walls were decorated with hangings of the national colours and military trophies; at one end was an altar surmounted by the statues of Liberty, Equality, and Peace, and ornamented with the different standards which had been taken from the enemy; on each side of the altar were seats in a semicircular form, composing a vast amphitheatre, and destined for the constituted authorities and the conservatory of music; from the walls were suspended the colours of the different armies of the republic; an immense crowd lined the court and windows of the palace, and all the neighbouring streets were filled with those who could not gain admittance within: the air perpetually resounded with their acclamations and shouts of joy.

At twelve o'clock at noon the sound of cannon announced the commencement of the fête, and the procession, which consisted of the Directory, the ministers of state, and constituted authorities, began to move from their different places of meeting towards the Luxembourg. After they had arrived, and were all seated, the president of the Directory gave orders to inform the foreign ministers, the ministers of war, and the generals Buonaparte, Joubert, and Andreossi, that the Directory were ready to receive them. The conservatory of music began a beautiful symphony, which was soon interrupted by the sound of repeated shouts, rending the air with

address to the Directory, he made use of the following expressions which were considered as remarkable at the time, and which did not become less so in their application to subsequent events. "In order to attain freedom, the French people had to fight with the allied kings; and to obtain a constitution founded on reason, they had to combat the prejudices of eighteen centuries. Superstition, the feudal system, and despotism have successively governed Europe for twenty ages; but the era of representative governments may be dated from the peace which you have just concluded. You have accomplished the organization of the Great Nation, whose vast territories are bounded only by the limits which nature has herself set to them. I present you the treaty of Campo-Formio, ratified by the Emperor. This peace secures the liberty, prosperity, and glory of the Republic. When the happiness of the French people shall be established upon the best-founded laws, the whole of Europe will become free."

The same reflection almost unavoidably occurs here as that suggested in the line in Hamlet—"Methinks the lady doth protest too much." But as Buonaparte's power and reputation hitherto had been connected with the triumph of the broad principles of the Revolution, they would naturally still predomi-

"Long live the great nation!" The noise continued to increase, the crowd kept pressing forward, every eye sparkled with expectation and curiosity, and turned towards the great door: Buonaparte entered! the enthusiasm of the people increased, not a single person was silent, but all cried out, with one impulse, and with one accord, "The deliverer of Italy—the pacificator of the continent."

Buonaparte advanced with calmness and dignity; it was the most sublime moment that a mortal could experience; the greatest trial to the feelings of a man; yet he showed the same coolness he had evinced in the midst of battle. He was accompanied by the ministers for foreign affairs, the minister of war and his aides-de-camp: the music played the Hymn to Liberty, and every one stood up uncovered. When he had arrived at the steps of the altar, he was presented to the Directory by Talleyrand, in a speech suited to the purpose: after it was finished, all seemed eager to hear the conqueror of Italy, the simplicity and modesty of whose appearance, formed a fine contrast to the grandeur of his situation, and every one present figured him at the bridge of Lodi, at Arcola, or Campo-Formio.—*Bourrienne.*



nate in his mind, whatever designs might lurk there pointing to a different conclusion. The floating visions of ambition and power had not yet acquired solidity or consistency enough to afford a practical counterpoise to the world of opinion and feeling around him. Men take their hue from surrounding objects and circumstances, till they can mould them in their turn; and scarcely acknowledge or bestow a glance of approbation on their own projects of aggrandisement or selfish policy, till they are ripe for execution, and seem by the near prospect of success to justify the attempt. Generals Joubert and Andreossy on this occasion carried the standard which the legislative body had presented to the army of Italy, with the chief actions which it had performed inscribed in letters of gold. The Directory, the Legislative Body, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs gave entertainments to Napoleon. He appeared at them, but only for a short time. At the house of Talleyrand, a celebrated woman (Madame de Stael) wishing to enter the lists with the Conqueror of Italy, addressed him in the midst of a numerous circle, desiring to know who, in his opinion, was the greatest woman in the world, dead or alive? "*She who has borne the greatest number of children,*" was the answer. This was the commencement of a long and galling rivalry between the wit and the future statesman. People thronged to the sittings of the Institute for the purpose of seeing Napoleon, who usually took his place there between Laplace and Lagrange, the latter of whom was sincerely attached to him. He never attended the theatre except in a private box; and declined a proposal from the managers of the Opera, who wished to give a grand representation in honour of him. When he afterwards appeared in public on his return from Egypt, his person was still unknown to the inhabitants of Paris, who flocked eagerly to see him. This shyness was not, as it may be thought, affected or the result of policy, but natural. It was the coming forward that was forced, or like assuming

a part. His temper was in itself reserved, and all his habits plain and simple. Besides, true glory always shrinks from the public gaze and admiration, except on rare and appropriate occasions; it has "that within which passes show;" and mere personal appearance or external homage can but ill correspond with and but imperfectly express the great things it has performed, or the greater which it meditates. It was well for Napoleon when he had, in the decline of his fortune, to show himself at the loop-holes of the Tuileries on "some raw and gusty day," in answer to the cries of a few idle boys who shouted "*Vive l'Empereur!*" under his window, that he could recall a time when he had withdrawn from the tumultuous and extravagant demonstrations of popular applause, and only submitted to it as a state necessity, or when the course of public events forced it upon him.

The Directory kept up an appearance of the greatest cordiality. When they thought proper to consult him, they used to send one of the ministers to request him to assist at the council, where he took his seat between two of them, and delivered his opinion on the matters in question. At the same time, the troops as they returned to France extolled him to the skies in their songs and in their talk; declaring that it was time to turn the lawyers out, and make him king. The Directory carried the affectation of candour so far as to show him the secret reports which were made by the police on the subject, though they could not conceal the jealousy and mortification which all this popularity excited in their minds. Napoleon was aware of the delicacy and difficulty of his situation. There was evidently something behind the government greater than the government itself. The proceedings of the administration were by no means popular, and many persons turned their eyes on the conqueror of Italy. The Directory proposed to him to return to Rastadt; but he refused to do so, on the ground that his mission into Italy had terminated at Campo-Formio, and it no longer be-

came him to wield both the pen and the sword. Soon after this he consented to accept the command of the army of England, as a cover to the design and preparations for the expedition into Egypt. The troops composing this army were quartered in Normandy, Picardy, and Belgium. Their new general visited every point, but chose to travel *incognito* through the Departments. His public reputation did not yet come up to his idea of himself. These secret journeys contributed to increase the anxiety of the British government, and to mask the preparations making in the South of France. It was at this period that he visited Antwerp, and conceived the plan of the important naval establishments which he carried into execution under the Empire. It was also in one of these journeys that he perceived the great advantages which St. Quentin would derive from the canal which was opened under the Consulate; and gave the preference to Boulogne over Calais, from the circumstance of the tide, for the purpose of attempting a descent upon England in boats. Nothing can be more shallow or unjust than the imputation so often thrown out against Buonaparte, that he was a mere soldier, and was compelled to go to war because he had no talents for or resources in peace. He had a mind and eye at all times alive and intent on whatever objects could aggrandize or adorn his country, either in peace or war, and, as he said of himself, "there was not an understanding in all France more essentially *civil* than his." His only fault was, that as he had a great capacity for business of every kind, and an indefatigable activity, he wished to extend his influence too far, beyond what is consistent with human ability, or the nature of human affairs, and sunk under the attempt to subject every thing to his control, as if he possessed a kind of omnipresence.

He had about this period several subjects of difference with the Directory, in few of which his advice prevailed. The first was the line of conduct to be observed towards Switzerland. France had serious

grounds of complaint against the canton of Berne and the Swiss aristocracy; all the foreign agents who had been employed to raise disturbances in France, had constantly made Berne their chief place of rendezvous. A fit occasion had now arrived for destroying the preponderance of this aristocracy, by means of the great influence which the republic had lately acquired in Europe. Buonaparte approved highly of the resentment of the Directory at the intrigues and machinations carried on against France, and was for seizing this opportunity for putting an end to them; but he did not think it necessary for that purpose to overturn everything in the country. The proper course appeared to him to be, for the French ambassador to present a note to the Helvetic Diet, supported by two camps, one in Savoy, the other in Franche-Comté; and to declare by this note that France and Italy considered it essential to their policy, their safety, and the tranquillity of all parties, that the Pays-de-Vaud, Argau, and the Italian bailiwicks should become free and independent cantons, on an equal footing with other cantons; that they had reason to complain of the aristocracy of certain families of Berne, Soleure, and Fribourg; but that they would consign all these causes of discontent to oblivion, provided the peasants of those cantons and the Italian bailiwicks were reinstated in their original rights. These moderate changes might have been effected without difficulty, and without resorting to arms; but Rewbell, overpersuaded by some zealous Swiss patriots, had got a different system in his head; and the Directory, without paying the least attention to the manners, religion, or local peculiarities of the different cantons, resolved upon giving Switzerland a constitution exactly similar to that of France. The small cantons were enraged at the loss of their liberty; the rest took up arms in defence of their immunities, and much blood was shed in appeasing a fruitless and unnecessary quarrel. This was furnishing a handle to the fears and jealousy of the conti-

mental powers; and violating (without any adequate motive) an asylum long held sacred to liberty. Switzerland was *rhetorical* ground; and in a war of names and prejudices, ought not in prudence to have been meddled with. Buonaparte himself fell into the same snare afterwards, tempted by the same bait, the love of power and interference. The independence of Switzerland thenceforth became one of the watchwords of the allied sovereigns, and a standing common-place in the list of phrases of their hireling declaimers. It is curious to see Napoleon, not only remonstrating against the conduct of the Directory beforehand, but inveighing against it with bitterness and derision even after he himself had been led to imitate the weak and unsound part of it. He should have taken warning, and let Switzerland alone; his not doing it was making war upon the name and language of liberty, often of more consequence than the thing itself!

Not satisfied with waking the echoes of ancient liberty in the rocks and valleys of Switzerland, the Directory were determined to bring all the owls and bats about their ears that were likely to be dislodged from the crumbling ruins of papal superstition. The court of Rome even after the treaty of Tolentino, urged on by its disappointments and disregarding its engagements, still chose to persist in its hostilities against the French name, quarrelled with the Cisalpine Republic, again placed an Austrian general (Provera) at the head of its troops, and excited a popular tumult; in attempting to quell which Duphot, a young general of the greatest promise, and who happened to be at this time at Rome on his travels, was murdered at the gate of the French ambassador's palace. The latter withdrew to Florence. Napoleon when consulted replied that "*Events ought not to govern policy, but policy events*"; that however wrong the court of Rome might be, the object was not to punish its folly or presumption, but to prevent the recurrence of similar accidents in future; that for this purpose it would be

best not to overturn the Holy See, but to require that it should make an example of the guilty, send away Provera, compose its ministry of the most moderate prelates, and conclude a Concordat with the Cisalpine Republic, which might prepare men's minds for something like a similar arrangement at a future period with the French Republic." But all this, except the last, had been tried before and failed. The Directory therefore (this time led by Lepaux) determined to give the rein to their resentment and revolutionary zeal, to march against the Pope, and dethrone that idol of slavish superstition. They thought that the words *Roman Republic* would act as a talisman and kindle all Italy into a flame. They did not at all approve of the half-measures suggested and pursued by Napoleon, his neutralising the spirit of liberty and tampering with the remains of antiquated bigotry; and threw out shrewd hints that he might have his private views in all this caution and moderation, and that not only by his considerate behaviour to the Pope, but by his zealous anxiety for the exiled priests, he wished to gain friends (and indeed had done so) among those who were not the friends of the Revolution. The idea that the attack on Rome might bring on a war with Naples they treated as altogether chimerical. Berthier accordingly received orders to march an army on Rome, and to re-establish the old Roman Republic, which was done without delay. The Capitol once more beheld consuls, a senate, and a tribunate. Fourteen cardinals went in procession to St. Peter's to sing *Te Deum* in commemoration of the restoration of the Roman Republic, and the destruction of the throne of St. Peter. Really in reading over such accounts as these, one is not surprised at Mr. Burke's expression of "the grand carnival and masquerade of this our age," applied to the freaks and absurdities of the French Revolution, though no one contributed more to them than he did by impeding its natural and salutary course with the rubbish of mouldering prejudices and venal

sophistry. One would suppose from the scene acted on this occasion that states were built up and Republics manufactured on the same principle that children build houses with packs of cards. But revolutions must be accomplished, like other things, according to nature. The fabric of society must grow up from a solid foundation, and its improvements be effected by the wide-spread and gradual triumph of general principles, and not by the sudden changes of scenery or preposterous assumptions of character, that are met with in a pantomime. Power and authority has its date; and different systems and maxims prevail at different periods of the world, and sweep away all traces of those which went before them; but to suppose we can disarm inveterate bigotry and crimson pride by a few cant phrases, that we can decompose the texture of men's minds and the inmost passions of their souls by infusing into them our own opinions of yesterday, or that we can get the very props and pillars of an ancient edifice of superstition to become accessory to their own condemnation and to walk in the pageant of their own disgrace, is contrary to all we know of history or human nature. To make an adversary an accomplice in the triumph over him, is a cruel mockery: those on the other hand who suppose that others are sincere converts to a cause that takes all their power and self-consequence from them, or thrust them out from being installed as the oracles of truth or the vicegerents of God upon earth, to be a byword and a laughing-stock to the world or to depend upon the shout and caprice of a mob, who before scarcely breathed but through their nostrils, are grossly deceived, and will in the end be both the dupes and victims of their own egotism and blindfold presumption. Scenes of a very scandalous and disorderly kind followed this farcical establishment of a republic, without one element of feeling or conviction to cement it; the hand that formerly restrained rapine and violence, and that seemed to say to the excesses of each party, "Hitherto shalt thou come and

no further!" was removed, and it was not till after some time that the ferment subsided. There is no occasion to suppose that it was fomented by the intrigues of foreign agents, though they might be very ready to lend a helping hand to it; but the thing could hardly happen otherwise.

Bernadotte had been sent ambassador to Vienna—a choice which Napoleon objected to; both because a soldier is a bad envoy to an enemy who has been often beaten, and on account of the violence of his character. Bernadotte suffered his temper to get the better of his judgment, and committed several imprudences. One day, he thought proper to hoist the tricoloured flag at the top of his hotel, without any apparent reason for so doing. The populace immediately rose, tore down the flag, and insulted Bernadotte. The Directory in the ebullition of its resentment sent for Napoleon, in order to obtain the sanction of his opinion. They communicated to him a message to the Councils, declaring war against Austria, and a decree investing him with the command of the army of Germany; but he strenuously dissuaded them from this step. "If you had intended war," he said, "you should have prepared for it, independently of what has happened to Bernadotte, who has been materially to blame. In declaring war, you are only playing the game of England. It would indicate very little knowledge of the policy of the cabinet of Vienna to imagine that if it had wished for war it would have insulted you; on the contrary, it would have flattered you and lulled your suspicions, whilst it was putting its troops in motion, and you would have learnt its real intentions only by the first cannon shot. Depend upon it, Austria will give you every satisfaction. To be thus hurried away by every event is to have no political system at all." These assurances of Napoleon calmed the irritation of the Directory; the conferences at Seltz took place, and, as he had predicted, the Emperor gave satisfaction. Yet it may be doubted whether this political reasoning



is not spun too fine, and whether Austria was not more actuated by soreness at recent defeats and by former ill-blood, which broke out in spite of its attempts at keeping up appearances, than by the dictates of sound policy. Buonaparte judging from himself (though he too not unfrequently resembled an angry chess-player) allowed too much to cool calculation and too little to passion in the motives and conduct of courts. The cabinet of Vienna could, under any circumstances, ill brook the neighbourhood of the French government, and was always ready to come to blows with it. It is certain that war did break out soon after; that Austria did nourish the hope and wish for it in her bosom, though restrained by the presence of the victor, whose back was no sooner turned than she threw off the mask, broke up the negotiations, and the first intimation the Republic received of it was by the murder of its ambassadors. It was with an enemy, with a host of enemies like this, that Napoleon always insisted on keeping terms of moderation and temper; and perhaps with the iron bit that he held in their mouths, such might be the wisest policy; but for any one else the advice was madness.

Buonaparte, in the meantime, who had at first given into the plan of the expedition to Egypt with great ardour, began to cool in his eagerness for it—whether he suspected that this expedition had been originally devised merely to get rid of him, or that he found more difficulties in the enterprise than he at first thought of, or that the plot and texture of affairs began to thicken around him, and to promise scope and food for his activity and ambition at home. He stated his opinion to the Directory. “Europe,” he observed, “is anything but tranquil; the Congress at Rastadt does not come to a close; you require a force in the interior and to keep the Western Departments in awe. Would it not be advisable to countermand the expedition, and wait for a more favourable opportunity?”

The Directory, alarmed at this apparent hesitation, urged the scheme more warmly than ever. They represented the affairs of the Republic as in a most prosperous condition, though they were on the brink of a precipice. The present moment, according to them, was the most propitious that had ever occurred for attacking England through Ireland and the East. Napoleon then offered to leave Desaix and Kleber, whose talents might prove serviceable to France in case of any emergency. The Directory, who knew not their value, refused, and said, "they were more likely to want soldiers than generals." Though a party was not at this time wanting to offer to come forward and place Napoleon at the head of the government, he declined; he was not as yet popular enough to stand alone, and, had he come forward now, he must have conformed and subjected himself to the views and maxims of others on the nature and ends of government, with whom he did not agree. He could not have stamped his own character on the state. He determined on these considerations to sail for Egypt, intending to return as soon as circumstances should be sufficiently ripe to call for his reappearance on the stage. To give him the ascendancy over others, it was necessary that disasters should happen in his absence, that France should deplore the want of his powerful aid, and that victory should return to her standards with him. In alluding to this part of his life, he remarks that he had peculiar ideas of the nature of government, and that the time was not come for putting them to the trial. What these peculiar ideas were, is pretty apparent. He thought of taking the command of the state into his own hands, as he took the command of an army. He was equally fitted for one or the other; but in neither case was he to have control or competitor. He would have his council of state as he had his council of war—to suggest and advise; but he was to determine, and the people were to obey. He vaulted into the empty seat of government as a wild Arab throws himself on

the back of a horse without a rider, "to turn and wind a fiery Pegasus," that answers both to the bit and the spur. A popular government was to him as chimerical an idea as a herd of centaurs ; and he hated what he had no faith in. It was so far a disadvantage to Buonaparte that he began his career as a military man ; for many had thus got a notion of his taking the helm of government as unprofessional and a sort of imposture and quackery. The world never resign without reluctance the idea they first conceive of a man ; and because they had not given him credit for various talents till he displayed them, think he could not have had them till they knew of them, though they must have existed equally before any proofs of them appeared. Hence half the obloquy, abuse, and misrepresentation poured upon his astonishing career. Men's littleness, envy, and incredulity must be bribed a long way beforehand to admit lofty and opposite pretensions, so that it is only when an individual is born to a throne that they conclude without hesitation or grudging that he must possess the abilities to fit him for it !

The government at this time (January 1798) celebrated the anniversary of the death of Louis XVI. ; and it was a great point in dispute whether Napoleon should be invited to attend the ceremony. On the one hand it was feared that if he did not go, it would tend to render the festival unpopular ; and on the other, that if he went, the Directory would be neglected, and he alone would be the object of public attention. He would have declined appearing at this fête altogether, as he did not approve of the occasion of it, and he enumerated his objections to the minister, who was sent to request his attendance in the following manner :—"That he had no public functions ; that he had personally nothing to do with this pretended fête, which, from its very nature, was agreeable but to few people ; that it was a very impolitic one, the event it commemorated being a tragedy and a national calamity ; that he very well

understood why the 14th of July was observed, being the period when the people had recovered their rights; but that it might have recovered them, and established a republic without polluting itself with the slaughter of a prince who had been declared inviolable and irresponsible by the constitution itself;\* that he did not undertake to determine whether that measure had been useful or injurious, but maintained that it was a melancholy event; that national fêtes were held in celebration of victories, but that the victims left on the field of battle were lamented; that to keep the anniversary of a man's death ought never to be the act of a government, although it might suit a faction or a sanguinary club; that he could not comprehend how the Directory, who had shut up the meetings of the Jacobins and the revolutionary clubs, could fail to perceive that this ceremony created for the Republic many more enemies than friends; that it estranged instead of conciliating, irritated instead of calming; and shook the foundations of government instead of adding to their strength." The minister employed by the Directory brought his classical parallels into play in answer to all this. He said that "Athens had always solemnized the anniversary of the death of Pisistratus, and Rome the fall of the Decemvirs; that it was the custom for all countries, and especially republics, to celebrate the fall of absolute power and the overthrow of tyrants as a triumph; that it was moreover a law of the country; and lastly, that the influence of the general of the army of Italy over public opinion was such, that it was incumbent on him to appear at this ceremony, as his absence might

\* Which constitution, be it remembered, he was in league with other princes of the like inviolable and irresponsible class to overturn by the slaughter, if needful, of millions of his people. Buonaparte afterwards polluted himself with the slaughter of another prince of the same house without a warrant from the strict letter of law or treaties, but with a very good one from the laws of self-preservation and dictates of common sense. Those who take it upon them to execute summary justice, and "cut the Gordian knot of policy" in that way, ought not to cavil about legal forms of proceeding.

be prejudicial to the interests of the commonwealth." A truer answer seems to be, that if the death of Louis XVI. was unjustifiable and contrary to every feeling that should animate the Republic, the best thing would have been for the French people to go into mourning on the occasion, and to recall the Count de Lille, as the best reparation they could make for the injury. But as long as all Europe made war upon the French government to avenge and compel them to acknowledge this wrong, and as they stood upon the defensive, refusing to give up the rights and privileges which devolved to them from the headless monarchy, repelling scorn with scorn, and force with force, in God's name let them take heart of grace on the occasion, and not blush or grow pale at an idle show in commemoration of an act, when they stood up to their knees in blood to defend it! The *backing out* of the Revolution in this manner was turning every drop of blood shed in its defence into a wanton waste of life, and every particle of spirit that was required to maintain it in time of need into cold water. Unfortunately the effect was but too plainly perceived afterwards. If Buonaparte was there in the place which was assigned him, to make good this act of national justice, this grave and imposing example to prove that one man was not of more worth than a whole people, and to keep out all impugnors of this great principle at issue between the race of mankind and the race of kings, whether he was the leader of those armies bright that once defied all opposition, or sat enthroned in mock-regal state, but still to the exclusion and in bitter derision of their pretensions, it was well—but if it was not so and for this purpose, he had no business where he was, first or last!

A middle course was pitched upon after several consultations. The Institute attended this ceremony; and it was settled that Napoleon should walk among the members in the class to which he belonged, thus performing as a duty attached to a public body an

act which he did not consider voluntary. This arrangement of the matter was very agreeable to the Directory. But when the Institute entered the church of St. Sulpice, some one recognised Napoleon; having pointed him out, he instantly became the object of general attention. As the Directory had been apprehensive, they were totally eclipsed. At the conclusion of the ceremony, the multitude suffered the Directory to walk out by themselves, and rent the air with shouts of "*Long live the General of the army of Italy!*" This trifling circumstance did not serve to allay the displeasure of the rulers of the state against him.

Another circumstance which happened about this time placed Napoleon under the necessity of loudly condemning the conduct of the Directory. At the Garchi coffee-house two young men, on account of the manner in which they wore their hair in tresses (which was considered as a political distinction) were insulted, attacked, and killed on the spot. This murder had been conducted, as it was supposed, under the orders of the minister of police, and was executed by some of its agents. Napoleon, even with a view to his own safety, found it necessary to keep a vigilant eye upon events of this nature. He gave loose to his indignation. The Directory were alarmed, and were weak enough to send one of their emissaries to him to gloss over this outrage, but without making any impression on Buonaparte, who persisted in the most unqualified and pointed reprobation of it. It was also at this period that Sir Sidney Smith, who was confined as a close prisoner in the Temple, applied to Buonaparte to use his influence with the Directory to allow him his freedom; but he made answer that he could do nothing, as they were determined to carry things with a high hand. It is a singular example of the effect of personal character and of a spirit of generosity and bravery when it shines through the whole air and deportment of a man, that Sir Sidney Smith, during the two years he remained in the Temple, obtained such influence over the gaoler, and the latter reposed

such confidence in his bare word of honour, that he often let him out on his parole, and accompanied him to coffee-houses, the theatres, or even went out hunting with him in the woods Ecouen near Paris, at the very time when he was supposed to be *au secret*. Such is the ascendant which courage and frankness of spirit exercise over the honest and humane mind.

A considerable change had taken place in Buonaparte's situation and manner of living since his return to Paris this time. He lived in a style of affluence; and was (whether he encouraged it or not) an object of public attention. Two years before, he had lived in great frugality as well as obscurity, and had often passed whole mornings at a little reading-room in the Palais-Royal, where, seeing him cold and tired, the wife of the master of the shop would sometimes invite him to take a basin of soup with her, applying to him the familiar epithet of her Little Corsican. As a recompence for this kindness and hospitality, Buonaparte, when First Consul, gave her husband the employment of making the abridgment of the *Moniteurs*, which was a considerable advantage to him. When afterwards it became a question how to restrict the liberty of the press, and some one proposed to Buonaparte to strike at the grievance complained of at once by putting down the reading-rooms, he replied, "No, he would never do that—he had known too well the comfort of having a place of that kind to go to, where he could always find a fire and the newspaper or pamphlet of the day to amuse him, ever to deprive others who might be in his situation of the same resource."\*

\* He used at this time to frequent the Café Corazza in the Palais-Royal.

## CHAPTER XVII.

## EXPEDITION TO EGYPT.

Expedition to Egypt; Buonaparte attacks Alexandria; captures Rosetta and Damanhour; sets out for Grand Cairo; skirmish with the Mamelukes; General Muireur assassinated by three Bedouins; the Pyramids first seen by the army; it approaches Cairo, suffers great privations; murmurs of the soldiery; battle of the Pyramids; surrender of Cairo to the French; description of the city.

BUONAPARTE set sail for Egypt\* from Toulon in the night of the 18th of May, 1798. He arrived before Malta, and took possession of that place on the 10th of June, after doubling Cape Corso and Cape Bonara. Caffarelli, seeing the strength of the place when they entered, observed to the Commander-in-Chief, "It was well we had friends here to let us in." When the French squadron left Toulon, it was composed of thirteen sail of the line, six frigates, and a dozen brigs, sloops, and cutters. There was one ship (the

\* There were three objects in this expedition to Egypt:—1st, to establish a French colony on the Nile, which would prosper without slaves, and serve France instead of the republic of St. Domingo, and of all the sugar-islands. 2ndly, To open a market for our manufactures in Africa, Arabia, and Syria, and to supply our commerce with all the productions of those vast countries. 3rdly, Setting out from Egypt as from a place of arms, to lead an army of 60,000 men to the Indus; to excite the Mahrattas and oppressed people of those extensive regions to insurrection: 60,000 men, half Europeans, and half recruits from the burning climates of the equator and tropics, carried by 10,000 horses and 50,000 camels, having with them provisions for fifty or sixty days, water for five or six days, and a train of artillery of 150 field-pieces, with double supplies of ammunition, would have reached the Indus in four months. Since the invention of shipping, the ocean has ceased to be an obstacle; and the Desert is no longer an impediment to an army possessed of camels and dromedaries in abundance.—*Monthon's Memoirs.*



Orient) of 120 guns, and three of 80. A fleet of several hundred sail accompanied it. The French squadron, availing itself of the number of light vessels it possessed, obtained intelligence from a great distance, so that the convoy had nothing to fear, and in case of falling in with the enemy, could easily get out of the reach of the engagement. Every French man-of-war had 500 soldiers on board, with a company of land-artillery amongst them. Twice a day, during the month they had been out at sea, the troops had been exercised in manœuvring the guns. The French army in all amounted to about 28,000 men. During a great part of the voyage, the probability of falling in with the English was the general subject of conversation. Nelson, who had been joined by Lord St. Vincent's ten ships, and was appointed to the command of the squadron that was on the look-out for the French fleet, was cruising off Toulon on the 1st of June. He did not then know that the French admiral had left that port, nor did he learn till he arrived at Naples on the 20th, that the French had landed their troops at Malta, and that the expedition was intended for Egypt. This destination was the only one that had escaped the English government, and had not been pointed out as probable in their instructions to the admiral. On having the intelligence of the capture of Malta by the French confirmed to him at Messina, and also hearing that they were making for Candia, he immediately passed the Faro of Messina, and made sail for Alexandria, where he arrived on the 29th of June.

The French squadron received the first intimation of the presence of an English fleet in these seas off Cape Bonara from a ship that fell in with it; and on the 25th of June, while reconnoitring the coast of Candia, it was joined by the frigate *La Justice*, which had been cruising off Naples, and which brought positive news to the same effect. Napoleon upon this gave orders that, instead of steering directly for Alexandria, the squadron should manœuvre so as to make

Cape Aza in Africa, twenty-five leagues to the west of Alexandria, and should not appear before this last place till further intelligence could be procured of the English fleet. On the 29th of the same month, the coast of Africa and Capa Aza were descried. Nelson was just then arrived before Alexandria, where gaining no tidings of the French squadron, he steered for Alexandretta, and from thence for Rhodes, scoured the Isles of the Archipelago, touched at Syracuse to take in water, and on the 28th of July anchored off Cape Coron at the extremity of the Morea, where he was first informed that the French army had landed in Egypt a month before.

When the French fleet arrived off Alexandria, a violent storm prevailed; but Buonaparte learning that the English had been there only a short time before, threw himself on shore at the risk of being wrecked. At the very moment when preparations were making for landing the troops, the signal was given that a ship of war was seen in the offing. "Fortune," exclaimed Napoleon, "wilt thou forsake me now? Only grant me five days!" The alarm was a needless one; the vessel was one of their own frigates. Buonaparte, however, had the troops landed in the course of the day;\* marched all night; and at

\* THE PROCLAMATION BEFORE THE LANDING IN EGYPT.

"Soldiers!—You are about to undertake a conquest, the effects of which upon the civilization and commerce of the world are incalculable. You will strike a blow, the surest and most vital which England can receive, until you give her her death-stroke. We shall have to make some fatiguing marches; to engage in a few combats; but success will crown our exertions. The destinies are favourable. The Mamelukes—retainers of England, tyrants of the unfortunate country—soon after our landing shall have ceased to exist.

"The people with whom we are about to be connected are Mahometans. The first article of their faith is this:—'There is no other God but God, and Mahomet is his prophet.' Do not gainsay them; live with them as you have done with the Jews—with the Italians; pay the same deference to their muftis and their imaums, as you have paid to the rabbins and the bishops; show to the ceremonies prescribed by the Koran, and to the mosques the same tolerance as you have shown to the convents and the synagogues—to the religion of Moses, and of Jesus Christ. The Roman legions protected all reli-

daybreak attacked Alexandria with only 3000 men, harassed with fatigue, destitute of cannon, and almost without a proper supply of cartridges. In five days he was master of Rosetta and Damanhour, that is to say, had already obtained a footing in Egypt. In those five days, if the instructions given by the General-in-Chief had been followed, the French squadron ought also to have been out of the reach of the English forces, however superior in numbers; but fate had ordered it otherwise. The difference indeed between Buonaparte and those who have been less the favourites of Fortune than he was, seems to have been, that as far as he could help it, he left nothing in her power; he seized her favours with a bold and nimble hand, and allowed not a moment's interval or the least opportunity for her caprice or neglect. He knew the inestimable value of time; and his sagacity in determining on the spot what was best to be done was equal to his rapidity in carrying it into effect.

Before the French general left Alexandria to advance against the Mamelukes, he repeated his orders to Admiral Brueys to enter the port, which could be done by lightening the largest ships (the small ones could enter easily); or if he should consider this impossible, then to proceed without loss of time to

gions. You will find here usages different from those of Europe: it is proper that you habituate yourselves to them.

"The inhabitants treat their women differently from us; but, in every country, he who violates is a monster. Pillage enriches only a few; it dishonours us, destroys our resources, and renders enemies those whom our interest requires to be friends. The first city we approach was built by Alexander; every step will awaken sublime recollections, worthy of exciting the emulation of Frenchmen."

To this proclamation was appended an order of the day, consisting of twelve articles, prohibiting pillage, as also every species of violence, and containing directions for collecting imposts and contributions. The punishments denounced upon delinquents were—repairing the damages inflicted, two years in irons, or death. Here I may be permitted a reflection. Passages in the proclamation have been severely animadverted upon as contrary to the doctrines of Christianity. But how absurd, to have entered Egypt with the cross in one hand, and the sword in the other! Policy and common sense required us to respect the religion of the inhabitants. Both this and other proclamations produced an excellent effect.—*O'Meara*.

Corfu, and thence back to Toulon. But the admiral neglected to enter the harbour of Alexandria, where he would have been safe from the attacks of the English fleet, on some nautical scruples, and lingered on the coast in hopes of hearing of the arrival of the army at Cairo before he quitted it ; thus by his over-solicitude for their safety running into danger himself, and taking away the only chance of the success of an expedition, at best hazardous, if not impracticable. Success in war, or in every species of enterprise, depends less on seeing what is fit to be done than on the spirit to do it, and on postponing our own particular fancies or feelings in affairs of importance ; for the course of events is mechanical, and goes on without the least regard to what men hope or fear.

Napoleon, anxious to strike a decisive blow, and willing probably to feel his ground in this new field of action where everything was strange and uncertain, had no sooner secured possession of Alexandria than he left it on the 7th of July, and set out on his way to Grand Cairo. The first place the army reached was Damanhour, having suffered greatly from the excessive heat and the want of water on its march. On the 10th they came to the borders of Rahmanieh, and joined General Dugua's division, which had come by forced marches by way of Rosetta. General Desaix had been attacked by 700 or 800 Mamelukes, who after a brisk fire and the loss of some of their number retreated. In the meantime, the French General was informed that Murad-Bey, at the head of his army, composed of a great quantity of cavalry, with eight or ten gun-boats and several batteries on the Nile, was waiting to intercept their progress at the village of Shebreis. In the evening of the 12th the troops marched forward to meet him, and on the 13th at daybreak, came in sight of this new enemy. The French had but 200 cavalry, many of which were disabled or worn out with fatigue : the Mamelukes presented a magnificent body of cavalry, covered with gold and silver, armed with the best London

carbines and pistols and the best sabres of the East, and mounted on the finest horses in the world.

The French army was drawn up on this occasion, so that each division formed a square battalion, with the baggage in the centre, and the artillery placed in the intervals between each battalion. The five divisions of the army were placed in echelon, flanking each other and flanked by two villages which they occupied. Admiral Perrée, with three gun-boats, a xebeck, and a half-galley, was to attack the enemy's flotilla. The action was obstinately sustained on both sides. Perrée was wounded by a cannon ball, but succeeded in retaking the gun-boats and half-galley which the Mamelukes had at one time taken, and in setting fire to the Admiral's ship. What shows the singular nature of the expedition was that the two celebrated naturalists, Monge and Berthollet, were in the xebeck during the whole action, and though exposed to great danger, behaved with admirable coolness and presence of mind. While the conflict was thus maintained on the Nile, the cavalry of the Mamelukes inundated the whole plain, outflanking the French wings, and seeking on every side for a weak point to enable them to break the line; but they found this everywhere equally formidable, and were received with a double fire from flank and front. They attempted several times to charge, but could not make up their minds to it. A few of the bravest came forward and skirmished; but were driven back by the fire of the carbineers, who were placed in advance of the intervals between the battalions. At length, after remaining great part of the day within half-cannon shot, they commenced their retreat and disappeared. Their loss was supposed to be about 300 killed and wounded.

After this, the French army marched for eight days without meeting any interruption, but often reduced to the greatest straits, and in one of the most scorching climates in the world. During the route they were much harassed by clouds of Arabs flocking from all parts of the Deserts, and hovering within a few

hundred yards of the camp, with a view to intercept the communications and to rob and murder all they could lay hands on. Their practice was to lie in ambush behind the dikes on their excellent little horses, and woe to him who straggled a hundred paces from the main column! They killed a great number of soldiers and officers. Among others, General Muireur, in spite of the remonstrances of the Guard, would go alone to a mount about two hundred paces from the camp. Behind it were three Bedouins, who assassinated him. His death was much lamented by the army and by the General-in-Chief. In the evening after the first day's march, the troops bivouacked at a place called Shabur, under some fine old sycamores, where they found the fields full of *battechs*, a species of water-melon, furnishing a wholesome and refreshing food. They met with them continually, as far as Cairo; and the soldier, to show how agreeable this fruit was to him, named it, like the ancient Egyptians, the *holy battech*. On the following day, the army began its march very late: some meat had been procured, which it was necessary to distribute with care as it was a great luxury. The flotilla still waited for the north-wind to ascend the Nile. The army slept at Kounscheric; and arrived the next day at Alkam, where General Zayonscheck received orders to land on the opposite bank, and advance to the point of the Delta. As there were no Arabs here, he could make what movements he pleased, and was of great assistance in procuring provisions.

On the 17th and 18th the army encamped at Abon-Neshabe and at Wardan, at which last place the bivouacks were formed in a large forest of palm-trees. The soldiers began by degrees to understand the customs of the country, and to dig up the lentils and other pulse which the peasants are accustomed to bury in the earth. The troops made short marches on account of the difficulty of obtaining provisions, and in order to be always in a condition to receive the enemy. They often took up a position by ten

o'clock in the morning, and the first care of the soldier was to bathe in the Nile. From Wardan they went to lie at Omdinar, whence on the 19th they first perceived the Pyramids, which border the horizon of the valley on the left bank of the Nile. They look like enormous masses of rock, but for the regularity of the lines and angles. All the telescopes in the army, Napoleon observes, were instantly levelled at these the most ancient monuments in the world. But why, at once wish to bring them close to the eye, to be familiar and in contact with them? Would it not be better to pause and linger on the gulf that separates us from this obscure dream and mighty wonder of the world before stripping it of its dim abstraction, and reducing it to a literal reality? One would think the mind would like to loiter and hang suspended for a time between its visionary feeling, and its waking thoughts and not break that mysterious spell at once. Wonder and fear should hold curiosity back, and gaze at a distance as at the giant phantom of the past. But no; the French think no object sacred from vulgar or scientific impertinence, and they have only two classes of ideas—words and sensible objects; the world of imagination is lost upon them! Buonaparte might have foreseen in this how they would one day turn round to look at him; pry into his foibles with their glasses, take his dimensions with a quadrant, and fortune having broken down the barrier between them, scan him with a critical eye, and wonder what it was they had ever found in him greater than themselves!

The army was approaching Cairo, and were informed by the country-people that the Mamelukes, combined with the troops of that city, and with a considerable number of Arabs, Janissaries, and Spahis, were waiting for them between the Nile and the Pyramids, covering Gizeh. They boasted that the French would there find the end of their journey. The latter halted a day at Omdinar. This pause was necessary to get the army in readiness, and to prepare for battle. Melancholy and sadness began to

take possession of the troops, who constantly regretted the luxuries of Italy. In vain had they been assured that the country was the most fertile in the world, and even superior to Lombardy; how were they to be persuaded of this when they could get neither bread nor wine? They often encamped in immense fields of wheat; but there was neither mill nor oven to be found. It would be difficult indeed to find a more fertile land, or a people more miserable, ignorant, and brutalised. They preferred one of the soldier's buttons to a crown-piece: in the country places they do not know the use of a pair of scissors. Their houses are built of mud, the whole furniture being a straw mat and two or three earthen pots. All their magnificence is lavished on their horses and arms. They eat or consume in general very little. The little grain the natives convert into flour they bruise with stones, although in some large villages there are mills which are turned by oxen. The biscuit which the French had brought from Alexandria had been long exhausted; so that they lived chiefly on pulse or parched wheat, or the cattle which they caught, or sometimes by shooting pigeons. The apprehensions and murmuring of the soldiers increased daily; and rose to such a pitch that many of them said there was no great city at Cairo; and that the place bearing that name was merely like Damanhour, a large assemblage of miserable huts. To such a state of despondency had they reduced themselves by complaints and gloomy forebodings, that two dragoons threw themselves in a fit of despair into the Nile, where they were drowned. The officers even complained more loudly than the men, as the change was proportionately disadvantageous to them. The General-in-Chief, in order to set an example, used to bivouac in the midst of the army and in the most inconvenient spots. No one had either tent or provisions; the dinner of Napoleon and his staff often consisted of a dish of lentils. The soldiers, to while away the time, passed the evenings in political discussions, questions, and complaints.



*For what purpose are we come here?* said some of them; *the Directory have transported us.* Caffarelli, said others, *is the instrument that has been made use of to deceive the General-in-Chief.* Many of them, taking notice that wherever there were any vestiges of antiquity they were carefully explored, vented their spleen in invectives against the *savans* or scientific men, who, they said, had started the idea of the expedition in order to make these idle researches. Jests were showered upon them, even in their presence. The men called an ass a *savant*; and said of Caffarelli Dufalga, alluding to his wooden leg, *He laughs at all these troubles; he has one foot in France.* But Dufalga and the men of science not long after regained the esteem of the army.

They set forward from Omdinar on the 21st of July, at one in the morning. At dawn, for the first time since the action of Shebreis, a Mameluke vanguard of 1000 horse showed itself; but it retreated in good order, without attempting anything. At ten o'clock, Embaheh was descried with the enemy in line. Their right was supported on the Nile, where they had constructed a large entrenched camp, lined with forty pieces of cannon, and defended by 20,000 infantry, Janissaries, Spahis, and militia from Cairo. The Mameluke cavalry rested its right on this entrenched camp, and extended its left towards the Pyramids, crossing the road to Gizeh. There was about 9000 or 10,000 horse, as nearly as could be guessed, and every horseman was attended by one or two foot soldiers. Two or three thousand Arabs kept aloof to the extreme left, and occupied the space between the Mamelukes and the Pyramids. These dispositions were formidable. The troops did not know what sort of stand the Janissaries and Spahis of Cairo would make; but they knew and were impressed with a full sense of the skill and impetuous bravery of the Mamelukes. The French army was drawn up in the same order as at Shebreis, the left resting on the Nile, the right on a large village, where

General Desaix commanded, and where it took him three hours to form his position and rest a little. The entrenched camp of the enemy was reconnoitred, and it was found that it was merely sketched out, having been begun only three days before, and might be of some service against a charge of cavalry, but not against an attack by infantry. It was also discovered by the help of good telescopes, that their cannon were not upon field-carriages, but were only great iron pieces, taken from the vessels and served by the crews of the flotilla. On this single observation (casual as it seems) the fortune of the day turned. An ordinary general would have taken it for granted that the artillery he saw was like any other artillery; but it is the true characteristic and property of genius to take nothing for granted, but, being alive to every possible change of circumstances, to look at everything as it is, and thus to be prepared to make continual new discoveries and combinations. No sooner had the General-in-Chief satisfied himself that the artillery was not moveable, than it was clear that neither it nor the infantry could quit the entrenched camp; or if the latter should come out, it must be without artillery. The dispositions for the battle were made accordingly; Buonaparte giving immediate orders to prolong the right and to follow the movement of that wing with the whole army, thus passing out of the range of the guns of the entrenched camp, and having only the Mamelukes and the cavalry to deal with.

Murad-Bey saw the columns put themselves in motion, and quickly guessed their purpose. Though not accustomed to this kind of warfare, nature had endowed him with a quick and discerning eye, and undaunted courage, which sharpens the sight of the mind by confronting it with the danger which it is not afraid to meet. The slight affairs in which the French had hitherto been engaged with the Mamelukes served him as experience, and he comprehended, with a degree of skill that could hardly have been expected in the most consummate European general,

that everything depended on preventing his adversary from accomplishing the movement he had commenced. He advanced with two-thirds of his cavalry (6000 or 7000), leaving the rest to support the entrenched camp; and came up at the head of his troops with such rapidity that the French squares seemed falling into confusion. General Desaix, on his march at the head of his column, had entered a grove of palm-trees. However, the head of the corps of Mamelukes, which fell upon him was not numerous, and as the mass did not arrive for some minutes, this delay proved sufficient. The squares were thus perfectly restored, and received the charge with coolness. Reynier supported their left. Napoleon, who was in Dugua's square, immediately marched on the main body of the Mamelukes, who were received with grape and a brisk fire of musketry; thirty of the bravest died near General Desaix, having reined their horses back on the enemy to throw them into disorder: but the mass, by an instinct natural to the horse, turned round the squares, and by this means frustrated the attack. In the midst of the fire of grape and ball, of the dust, cries, and smoke, part of the Mamelukes regained the entrenched camp, according to the natural impulse of the soldier to retreat to the spot from whence he set out. Murad-Bey and the most expert directed their flight towards Gizeh; and thus this commander found himself separated from his army. The divisions of Bon and Menou, which had formed the left, then advanced on the entrenched camp; and General Rampon was detached with two battalions to occupy a kind of defile between Gizeh and the camp, to prevent Murad-Bey from returning to it, or the Egyptian soldiers from following him.

The greatest confusion prevailed at Embaheh. The cavalry had thrown itself upon the infantry, which, seeing the Mamelukes beaten, rushed into the jerns, kaiks, and other boats, to repass the Nile. Many effected the passage by swimming, an exercise in which the Egyptians excel. The forty pieces of cannon which were to have defended the camp did

not fire two hundred shot. The Mamelukes, quickly perceiving that their retreat was in the wrong direction, strove to regain the Gizeh road, but were driven back by Rampon's division, on the entrenched camp, where many of them fell, and many more were drowned in attempting to pass the Nile. Their floating bodies carried the news of the victory in a few days to Rosetta, Damietta, and all along the banks. Not more than 2000 horse escaped with Murad-Bey, who finding that he was not joined by the rest, turned back several times to open a passage for them, but it was too late. The loss of the enemy on this day was reckoned at 10,000, including Mamelukes, Janissaries, Spahis, and slaves belonging to the Mamelukes. The artillery, pontoons, and baggage, all fell into the power of the French, with a thousand prisoners, and eight or nine hundred camels, and as many horses. It was at the beginning of this battle that Napoleon addressed to the soldiers that noble apostrophe which afterwards was so often cited.—*"From the top of those Pyramids forty centuries look down upon you!"*

It was night when the three divisions of Desaix, Reynier, and Dugua returned to Gizeh. The General-in-Chief fixed his head-quarters there, in Murad-Bey's country house. The Mamelukes had sixty vessels on the Nile, containing all their riches. In consequence of the unexpected result of the battle, they lost all hopes of saving them, and set them on fire. During the whole night, through the volumes of smoke and flame, the French could perceive the forms of the minarets and buildings of Cairo and the City of the Dead. These columns of flame gave so much light that they could even see the Pyramids by it. The Arabs, according to their custom after a defeat, rallied far from the field of battle, in the Desert beyond the Pyramids. For several days the whole army was busily engaged in fishing for the bodies of the Mamelukes that had been drowned; their valuable arms, and the quantity of gold they were accustomed to carry about them rendered the soldiers very zealous

in this search. Three, four, or five hundred Louis-d'ors were often found upon them. The French flotilla had not been able to follow the movement of the army in time; but they had heard the cannon, notwithstanding the north-wind, which now blew with violence and carried the sound from them. As it grew calmer, the noise of the cannon became louder; so that at last it appeared to have come nearer them; and the seamen in the evening gave the battle up for lost, till the multitude of bodies which passed near their ships, and which were all Mamelukes, restored their confidence. The populace of Cairo, the vilest in the world, when they heard of the disasters of their own people, set fire to the houses of the Beys, and committed all sorts of excesses.

About nine in the evening Napoleon entered the country-house of Murad-Bey at Gizeh. It did not at all answer to the idea of a gentleman's country-seat in Europe. It was a point of some difficulty at first to make it serve for a lodging, or to understand the distribution of the apartments. But what chiefly struck the officers with surprise was the great quantity of cushions and divans covered with the finest damasks and Lyon silks, and ornamented with gold fringe. For the first time they found the luxury and arts of Europe in Egypt—the cradle of luxury and arts. Part of the night was spent in exploring this singular mansion in every direction. The gardens were full of magnificent trees, but without alleys, and not unlike the gardens in some of the nunneries in Italy. What most delighted the soldiers (for every one crowded to see the place) was the discovery of large arbours of vines loaded with the finest grapes in the world. The vintage was quickly over. The two divisions of Bon and Menou, that had remained behind in the entrenched camp were equally well off. Amongst the baggage taken, had been found a great number of canteens full of preserves, pots of confectionery, and sweetmeats. Carpets, porcelain, vases of perfumes, and a multitude of little elegancies used by the Mamelukes, every moment raised the curiosity

or tempted the cupidity of the army, who now began to be reconciled to Egypt, and to believe at last that Cairo was not like Damanhour. It was only the country-places that were poor and oppressed ; in proportion to the general poverty and oppression of the people, the towns and habitations of those who oppressed them and drained them of every necessary or comfort, were stored with every luxury and delicacy.

The next morning at daybreak, Napoleon proceeded to the river, and seizing some boats, made General Vial pass over to the Isle of Rodah, which was taken after a few musket-shots. There was nothing further to separate the army from Boulac and Old Cairo but a large canal. The flotilla was impatiently expected, as the wind was fair ; but it had run aground, owing to the lowness of the water. This gave the General-in-Chief some uneasiness, as it was necessary to take Cairo in the first moment of the enemy's stupor and surprise. It was lucky that the Janissaries of Cairo, who had been engaged in the battle, had returned in the greatest consternation and represented the French in a light approaching to the marvellous. A dragoon was sent to the Pacha and Cadi-Scheik, with the proposals of the General-in-Chief and his printed declaration that he did not make war upon the Turks, but only on the Mamelukes. The Pacha had already left the place, but his secretary came and had a conference with the French General, who engaged him to persuade Ibrahim-Bey to retire and the people of Cairo to submit. The following morning a deputation of the Scheiks of Cairo came to Gizeh, and brought word that Ibrahim-Bey had already left the city, and was gone to encamp at Birketel-hadji ; that the Janissaries had wished to surrender ; and that the Iman of the Grand Mosque of Jemilazar had been charged to treat for a surrender and to implore the clemency of the victor. The deputies remained several hours at Gizeh, where everything was done to conciliate them. The next day General Dupuy went to Cairo and took possession of the citadel. The troops passed the canal and occupied Old Cairo and Boulac. The General-in-

Chief made his entrance into Cairo on the 25th of July, at four o'clock in the afternoon. He went to lodge in the square of El-Bekir, at the house of Elphi-Bey, whither he removed his head-quarters. This house was situated at one of the extremities of the town, and the garden communicated with the country.

Cairo is situated half a league from the Nile. Old Cairo and Boulac are its ports. A canal which crosses the city is usually dry, but fills during the inundation of the Nile, when the dike is cut. Cairo is commanded by a citadel placed on a hill, which overlooks the whole city, and is separated from the Mokattam by a valley. An aqueduct, which is a remarkable work, supplies the citadel with water. The citadel also draws water from Joseph's Well, but it is not so good as that of the Nile. This fortress was neglected and falling to ruins, as well as the walls, which were built by the Arabs and surmounted by enormous towers. The Mamelukes never repaired anything. Half the walls abut on the Desert, so that dry sands are met with on going out by the Suez gate or those which are towards Arabia. Cairo contains about 210,000 inhabitants. The streets are built very high and narrow, in order to obtain shelter from the sun. The beys have very fine palaces in the Oriental style. The okels are great square buildings for merchandise, with large inner courts, and with little shops of ten or twelve feet square on the outside or next the street, in which the merchant sits with samples of his goods. Cairo contains a number of mosques, intended chiefly for the accommodation of pilgrims, who sleep in them: amongst these is Jemilazar, said to be the largest mosque in the East. In one quarter are a few European families, and some convents for the Syrian Catholics. The town abounds in coffee-houses, in which the inhabitants meet to take coffee, sherbet, and opium, and confer on public affairs. Around the city, as well as near Alexandria, Rosetta, &c. are to be seen great mounds of earth and ruins, which have

a disagreeable effect, and are daily increasing, because all the rubbish from the city is brought thither. The French wished to remove this nuisance: but difficulties arose, as experience had convinced the people that it was dangerous to throw this rubbish into the Nile, where it either stopped up the canals or was spread over the country by the flood. Close to the city of Cairo, towards the Desert, is the City of the Dead, which is larger than Cairo itself: it is here that every family has its place of burial. A multitude of mosques, tombs, minarets, and domes keep up the memory of distinguished persons who have been buried here, and who have had them built for this purpose. There are attendants to many of the tombs, who keep lamps burning in them and show the interior to the curious. Somehow there is a cadaverous air that in general hovers over the East; decay and desolation have piled up their stateliest monuments there; Death lurks close by Life; and they treat the living bodies of men as no better than lifeless carcases!



## CHAPTER XVIII.

## THE BATTLE OF THE NILE.

**Battle of the Nile ; French and English seamen ; Nelson blockades Alexandria, and goes to Naples ; Buonaparte's letter to the widow of Admiral Brueys ; his letter to General Kleber.**

THE celebrated battle of the Nile, or naval battle of Aboukir as the French call it, took place on the 1st and 2nd of August, 1798. This cut the nerves of the expedition, and from that time it halted and in the end fell to the ground. The English government had been completely deceived as to the project of the expedition to Egypt. Nelson had not the smallest idea of the destination of the French fleet ; nor was it till he had been repeatedly thrown out in the pursuit, and had coursed up and down the Mediterranean several times, like a hound at fault, that he at last got a scent of his prey.

After the action of Rahmanieh, the Arabs of Bahire intercepted all communication between Alexandria and the French army ; nor did they desist till the news of the battle of the Pyramids and the taking of Cairo made them apprehensive of the resentment of the French. It was not till the second day after his entrance into Cairo (July 27) that Napoleon received for the first time dispatches from Alexandria with Admiral Brueys's correspondence. By these he was extremely surprised to find that the squadron, notwithstanding his urgent and precise orders, was not yet in safety ; that it was neither in the port of Alexandria nor on its way to Corfu or Toulon, but waiting in Aboukir roads, exposed to the attacks of an enemy of greater force.

Instead of getting under weigh the instant he had landed the artillery and army stores, the Admiral wasted time (as if bound by a spell) in rectifying his line of mooring, supporting his left behind the little Isle of Aboukir, where thinking it unassailable, he placed his worst ships, the *Guerrier* and *Conquerant*, and having a battery of ten twelve-pounders constructed on it. Buonaparte, on learning these particulars, dispatched his aide-de-camp Julien from the army to the Admiral to inform him of his great disapprobation, and to warn him to set sail immediately, and either to get into Alexandria or make for Corfu. He reminded him that all naval ordinances forbade the receiving battle in an open road. The aide-de-camp set out on the 27th at seven in the evening, and could not have arrived before the 3rd or 4th of August, that is, till after the battle had taken place; but he had only reached Teramia, when a party of Arabs surprised the jerm in which he was, and this spirited young man was massacred by them, while courageously defending the dispatches of which he was the bearer, and of which he knew the importance.

Admiral Brueys remained inactive in the bad position he had chosen. An English frigate, which had been detached twenty days before by Nelson, of whom she was now in search, presented herself before Alexandria and went to Aboukir to examine the whole line of moorings, which she accomplished with impunity: not a ship, frigate, or brig was under sail. Yet the Admiral had above thirty light ships with which he might have scoured the sea; they were all at anchor. At any rate he should have kept a few of these in readiness to prevent any light English vessels from watching his motions, and to obtain the earliest intelligence of their approach. On the 31st of July, Nelson sent forward two of his ships, which reconnoitred the French line of moorings without molestation. On the 1st of August, the English squadron came in sight towards three o'clock in the

afternoon, with all sails set. A fresh gale of wind was blowing. Admiral Brueys was at dinner; a part of the crews were on shore; the decks were not cleared in a single ship. The Admiral immediately gave orders to prepare for action, and dispatched an officer to Alexandria to demand the seamen of the convoy. Shortly after, he made a signal to get under sail; but the English squadron came up so rapidly, that there was hardly time to clear the decks, which was done with extreme negligence. Even on board the *Orient*, the Admiral's ship, some cabins which had been constructed on the poop for the accommodation of the officers of the army during the passage, were not removed, but were left full of mattresses and buckets of paint and tar. The *Guerrier* and the *Conquerant* each cleared only one tier of guns for action; the side that was towards the land was encumbered with all that had been cleared out from the opposite side; so that when the ships were turned, that side could not fire. The English could hardly believe this when they saw it, and sent to examine the reason of it. They saw the French flag wave, though not a gun was fired.

The men who had been spared from the different crews had scarcely time enough to return on board. The French Admiral, judging that the enemy would not be within gun-shot before six o'clock, supposed that he would not attack until the following day, more particularly as he only observed eleven seventy-four-gun ships; the two others had been sent forward to Alexandria, and did not rejoin Nelson till eight in the evening. Brueys did not believe the English Admiral would attack him the same day, and with only eleven ships. Besides, it is imagined he thought at first of getting under weigh, but that he deferred giving the orders till the sailors whom he was expecting from Aboukir should be embarked. All this was wrong; showed either little stomach for the fight, by which he judged of others, or the waiting for an idle concurrence of favourable circumstances, instead of

making the best use of those in his power. The cannonade now commenced; and an English ship having struck on the isle, this accident gave Brueys fresh confidence. The sailors from Alexandria did not arrive till towards eight o'clock, and a great many of them took advantage of the confusion and darkness to remain on shore. The English Admiral's plan was to attack ship after ship, every English ship anchoring astern, and placing herself athwart the head of a French ship; but accident altered this original design. The Culloden, intending to attack the Guerrier, and endeavouring to pass between the left of that ship and the isle, struck. Had the isle been supplied with a few pieces of cannon, this ship might easily have been taken. The Goliah which followed her, manœuvring to anchor athwart the head of the Guerrier, was carried away by the wind and current, and did not anchor till she had passed and turned that ship. Perceiving then that the larboard tiers of the Conquerant did not fire, she placed herself alongside of that vessel and soon disabled her. The Zealous, the second English ship, followed the movement of the Goliah, and anchoring alongside the Guerrier, which could not return her fire, speedily dismasted her. The Orion, the third English ship, executed the same manœuvre, but was retarded in her movement by the attack of a French frigate, and cast anchor between the Franklin and the Peuple Souverain. The Vanguard, the English Admiral's ship, cast anchor athwart the Spartiate, the third French ship. The Defiance, the Bellerophon, the Majestic, and the Minotaur followed the same movement, and engaged the centre of the French line as far as the Tonnant, the eighth ship. The French Admiral and his two seconds formed a line of three ships, having greatly the advantage in size and weight of metal of those of the English. The fire was terrible: the Bellerophon was disabled, dismasted, and compelled to strike. Several other English ships were obliged to sheer off; and if at that moment Admiral Villeneuve,

who commanded the right of the French navy, had cut his cables and fallen on the English line with the five ships under his command, it must have been in the greatest danger of being destroyed. The Culloden had struck on the Bequieres bank, and the Leander was engaged in trying to bring her off. The Alexander and Swiftsure, two other English ships, seeing that the enemy's right did not stir, and that their own centre was hard pressed, made towards it. The Alexander took the place of the Bellerophon, and the Swiftsure attacked the Franklin. The Leander, which till then had been engaged in righting the Culloden, perceiving the situation in which the centre stood, hastened to its relief. Victory was still far from being decided either way. The Guerrier and Conquerant no longer fired, but they were the worst ships the French had ; and on the side of the English the Culloden and Bellerophon were disabled. The centre of the French line had, by the great superiority of its guns, occasioned the ships opposed to it more damage than it had itself sustained. The English had only three seventy-fours against two eighty-fours and one hundred-and-twenty-gun ship. It was to be presumed, then, that the fire being thus kept up all night, Admiral Villeneuve would at last get under weigh in the morning, and a different turn to the affair must be expected by the French from the attack of five good ships, which as yet had neither fired nor received a single cannon-shot. But at eleven o'clock the Orient, belonging to the French Admiral, took fire and blew up. This event decided the victory. The dreadful explosion of this ship suspended the action for a quarter of an hour. At the end of that period, the firing commenced again, and continued without any abatement till three o'clock in the morning, when it slackened on both sides till between five and six. It then redoubled and became as terrible as ever. In a word, the battle was raging at noon, nor was it over before two o'clock. Villeneuve then seemed to awaken from his trance, and to perceive

that the fleet had been fighting for twenty hours. He cut his cables and stood out to sea with two of his ships, the *Guillaume Tell*\* and *Généreux*, and with two frigates; his other three ships ran aground without fighting. Such was the havoc made in this determined fight that, twenty-four hours after the battle, the French flag was still flying on board the *Tonnant*, and Nelson had no ship in a condition to attack her. Not only the *William Tell* and *Généreux* were not pursued by any of the English ships, but in the shattered state they were in, they were not sorry to see them make off. Admiral Brueys, though he had received several wounds, would not go down to the cockpit; he died on his quarter-deck, giving his orders, a little before the *Orient* blew up. After that event, Villeneuve became commander, and was the judge of his own motions; what then becomes of the plea, that he waited for orders? Admiral Villeneuve was understood to be a brave and good seaman; his remaining a quiet spectator of a battle which lasted for twenty hours can, therefore, only be accounted for in one of three ways; either from a sudden and invincible panic at the moment; or from that over-anxiety about what was proper to be done, which suspends all power of action; or from that turn of mind through which the slightest motives, a mere form or a point of etiquette, outweigh the most serious and important consequences.

It is quite certain that an English admiral would not have remained neuter in this position, nor would the crews have let him, not from a difference of tactics in the two navies, but from a difference of common sense. The English understanding, so to speak, even from a certain slowness and hebetude, runs less into fine distinctions, and is less liable to be led away by a variety of minor considerations, which it has not the art to magnify at pleasure into matters of importance;

\* This and the *Franklin* are the names of French ships, and show at least the side their country affected.

it sees and attends only to the principal point, the *one thing needful*, and therefore in cases of critical emergency and urgent necessity, possesses a sounder practical judgment than the French, which flutters about an object, and is distracted by a multiplicity of shifting and insignificant views of the same thing. For the same reason the English are as inferior to the French in diplomacy as they are superior to them in downright action; because there the essential business is not to feel the real *home* truth, but to disguise it and draw off attention from it by fifty evasions and verbal excuses. The predominant feature of the English is a certain honesty or sincerity of feeling which makes them dupes—but accompanied with a steadiness of purpose and a proportion in their efforts to their sense of the importance of the occasion, which does not allow them to be willing ones. I have dwelt on this because I think it affords a clue to the superiority of the English naval tactics. The French are undoubtedly brave, but their bravery seems to be an affair of impulse; they do not stop to calculate consequences, but yield to their national ardour and impetuosity, and rush at once on danger and the foe. Had Villeneuve had to lead a battalion of cavalry to the field, I have little doubt he would have been withheld by no considerations of prudence or punctilio from obeying the instinct of personal courage; and charging at their head, have exposed himself in the thickest of the ranks with the greatest gallantry and boldness. But in the other case, he had to manœuvre four or five unwieldy ships, to guide a complicated mechanical operation, to prevent their running ashore, to come up to the point of action, and all this nautical preparation and process of abstraction threw a damp upon his natural ardour and held his judgment in suspense. Now the Englishman's head is essentially mechanical, and his will acts upon the decision of the understanding:—when a Frenchman, on the contrary, has to act from foresight and combination, he forgets the end in the means, and is

either rash and flighty, or formal and pedantic. So much for the naval commander. Again, with respect to those under his command, the courage of the French is in attack, or in venturing upon danger ; the courage of the sailor is wholly or chiefly in defence, or in holding out against it. Except in the case of boarding a vessel, he cannot get at his enemy or intimidate him either by gallant bearing or by personal prowess ; he merely mans his own guns, and stands the fire of the enemy's battery with resolution and presence of mind, and certainly in this, which may be called the passive part of courage, the English sailor bears the bell alone. It is bred in his blood and in his bone. Stupid he may be, brutal he may be, low and vulgar ; but he endures pain and wounds without flinching, and he will be sooner cut in pieces than he will give in. A bullet whizzing by makes him recollect himself ; a splinter that stuns him brings him to his senses ; the smart of his wounds sharpens his courage, and all that damps and startles others rivets him to his post. The British tar feels conscious of his existence in suffering and anguish, and woos danger as a bride. There is something in this Saxon breed of men like the courage and resolution of the mastiff, that only comes out on such occasions. Coarse, dull, vicious, obstinate, bowed down by ignorance and benumbing want, there is something in his soul that struggles with his fate, and seeks to throw off the load that oppresses it, and stakes its all on one hour of heroic daring or unshaken fortitude ; and shut out from effeminate delights, takes a pride in the extremity of pain, stands by his country, the only thing on which he values himself, to his latest breath, and wipes out a life of shame and ignominy by a glorious end. The wooden walls of Old England are nothing but this hard obdurate character, that melts and expands in the heat of battle as in a summer's day, that welcomes a cannon-ball as an even match, feels the first flush of triumph with the last gush of life, and is quits with the world by the shout of victory and



death! The difference, then, of the French and English navy depends on the character of the two nations, and this will change when the bull-dog changes natures with the greyhound. It has been said that the great error of the French (in which they persist in spite of experience) is in firing at the rigging instead of the decks; but this is only another example of what has been said before of being attached to a theory or a whim, instead of minding the *mainchance*.\*

Buonaparte labours hard, probably from jealousy of the English, probably from professional prejudice, to show the inferiority of the naval to the land-service. His reasoning is acute, but seems like *ex-parte* evidence. Lord Nelson could probably have given reasons in favour of the navy with equal plausibility. Such reasonings are seldom satisfactory, when one can tell beforehand the side the arguer will take. Buonaparte, however, assigns three grounds of his determination on this point: 1st, the equality of the surface at sea, and that you always see your enemy; 2nd, that much more depends on the captains of the different ships, and the courage of the individual crews: 3rd, the difficulty of provisioning a large army by land, whereas the naval commander carries his own stores, camp, and citadel with him. The two last may be true; but with respect to the first, the greater inequality and accidents of the ground by land, is not that balanced by the uncertainty of the winds and waves at sea, and the necessity of managing these? Out of the three great actions which Lord Nelson

\* As I was crossing the channel not long ago, there was a cry of *A man overboard*. The vessel was stopped in an instant. The boat, which had been just lashed to the rigging, was only half disentangled, when three of the sailors hung in it like swallows. It was no sooner let down than a fourth jumped into it; and they set off with the rapidity of lightning in pursuit of the drowning man, eagerly seizing every hint and sign from the ship as to the direction they were to take. They got up with him just in time, and brought him safe on board. Ten minutes after they were at their ordinary work, looking as dull, awkward, and indifferent as possible, nor could you tell from their demeanour that anything extraordinary had happened. It is this lying by for action that is the *forte* of the English character.

fought, two were fought close on land, and he had to provide for risks of running ashore, for passing over the bar of a harbour, and a number of other collateral circumstances. Buonaparte says the naval commander requires but one science, that of navigation, which is certainly a thing of experience and routine; and brings as a proof of the little genius that this species of warfare exacts, that Alexander and Condé could not have fought battles at sea as they did by land, when they were only two-and-twenty. But this only seems to infer that naval tactics require more knowledge and science, not that they give less scope for genius and tact. People may be supposed to have a natural turn for war by land, because it is natural to live on land and not at sea; so that these are the first observations we make, the first language we learn. That another science besides that of navigation is necessary to the naval commander, is evident from the conduct of the French admiral in this engagement, namely, common sense.

The crews of the three French ships which grounded at the end of the engagement, and those of the two frigates, landed on the beach at Aboukir. A hundred men escaped from the *Orient*, and a great number of men from the other ships took refuge on shore, availing themselves of the confusion and distress. The army thus obtained 3500 recruits, out of which a nautical legion was formed. The French had still several frigates and lighter vessels in the port of Alexandria. A few days after the battle, Nelson set sail and quitted the shores of Alexandria, leaving two ships of war to blockade the port. He was received in triumph, and with every mark of honour at Naples. The loss of the battle of Aboukir in the end proved fatal to the expedition into Egypt: first, by depriving the army of their battering train, the want of which stopped them at St. Jean d'Acre, and secondly, by giving the Divan courage to declare war against France. The French General-in-Chief was before this event sanguine with respect to success, and sometimes talked

jocularly of returning home by way of Constantinople. Buonaparte considers a fleet of thirty sail of the line as equal to an army of 120,000 men, taking one thing with another; and he conceives that France might maintain an establishment of three such fleets as well as three armies of 120,000 men each.

Two letters, written by him on this occasion, deserve to be inserted here, the one as showing his humanity, the other his national spirit, and both his indefatigable activity of mind.

*Buonaparte's Letter to the Widow of Admiral Brueys.*

“Cairo, 19th of August, 1798.

“Your husband has been killed by a cannon-shot, while fighting on his deck. He died without pain, and by the best death, and that which is thought by soldiers the most enviable.

“I am keenly sensible to your grief. The moment which severs us from the object we love is terrible: it insulates us from all the earth; it inflicts on the body the agonies of death; the faculties of the soul are annihilated, and its relation with the universe subsists only through the medium of a horrible dream which distorts everything. Mankind appear colder and more selfish than they really are. In this situation we feel that if nothing obliged us to live, it would be much best to die: but when after this first thought we press our children to our hearts, tears and tender emotions revive the sentiments of our nature, and we live for our children. Yes, madam, see in this very moment how they open your heart to melancholy; you will weep with them, you will bring them up from infancy—you will talk to them of their father, of your sorrow, of the loss which you and the Republic have sustained. After having once more attached your mind to the world by the ties of filial and maternal love, set some value on the friendship and lively regard I shall always feel for the wife of my friend. Believe that there are those who deserve to be the

hope of the afflicted, because they understand the poignancy of mental sufferings."

*From General Buonaparte to General Kleber.*

"Cairo, 10th of September, 1798.

"A ship like the Franklin, General, which had the Admiral on board, the Orient having blown up, ought not to have surrendered at eleven o'clock. I think, moreover, that the officer who surrendered this ship is extremely culpable, because it is proved by his own *procès verbal* that he took no measures to wreck his ship and render it impossible to bring it to: this will be an eternal disgrace to the French navy. It is not necessary to know much of manœuvres or to possess extraordinary talents, to cut a cable and run a ship aground; besides, these measures are especially prescribed in the instructions and ordinances given to captains in the navy. As for the conduct of Rear-Admiral Duchaila, it would have become him to have died on his quarter-deck, like Du Petit-Thouars.

"But what deprives him of every chance of restoration to my esteem, is his base conduct among the English since he has been a prisoner. There are men who have no blood in their veins. He will hear the English, then, drink to the disgrace of the French navy, while they intoxicate themselves with punch. He is willing to be landed at Naples, then, as a trophy for the Lazzaroni to gaze at; it would have been much better for him to have remained at Alexandria, or on board-ship, as a prisoner of war, without ever wishing or asking for any favour. When O'Hara, who nevertheless was a very common character, was made prisoner at Toulon, and was asked by me on the part of General Dugommier, what he wished for, he answered, '*To be alone, and not to be indebted to pity.*' Attentions and courtesy are honourable only to the victor; they do no credit to the vanquished, whom reserve and haughtiness best become."

Buonaparte also at the same time addressed a short and affecting letter to the father of Vice-Admiral Thevenard, who was killed in the battle.

## CHAPTER XIX.

## SITUATION OF EGYPT.

The French advance on Syria ; Napoleon overtakes Ibrahim Bey on the borders of the desert ; a desperate cavalry action, and Ibrahim wounded ; Napoleon receives the news of the battle of the Nile, and repairs to Cairo ; his extraordinary resources in difficulties ; Egyptian character ; geographical situation of Egypt, climate, population, productions, commerce, &c. ; Buonaparte celebrates the Feast of the Prophet ; his apparent conformity to Mahometanism ; General Menou becomes a convert in reality ; origin of the hospital of the Quinze-Vingts at Paris.

A FEW days after his entrance into Cairo, Buonaparte ordered Reynier's division to proceed to Elkhankah, where General Leclerc's cavalry were fighting with a multitude of Arabs and peasants of the country, whom Ibrahim-Bey had prevailed upon to revolt. About fifty peasants and some Arabs were killed in these skirmishes. The General-in-Chief followed with the divisions of General Lannes and Dugua, and the troops proceeded by long marches on Syria, constantly driving Ibrahim-Bey and all the forces he commanded before them.

On the road to Belbeis, they delivered part of the caravan of Mecca, which the Arabs had carried off and were conveying into the Desert, into which they had already advanced two leagues. It was conducted to Cairo under a good escort. At Koureyn they found another part of the caravan, composed of merchants, who had been first stopped by Ibrahim-Bey, and after being released by him were plundered by the Arabs. The booty seized by them must have been considerable ; one merchant alone having lost goods to the amount of 200,000 crowns. This merchant had all his women

with him, according to the custom of the country. The General-in-Chief ordered a supper for them, and procured them camels for their journey to Cairo. Several of the females appeared to possess handsome figures; but their faces were covered, a custom to which the soldiers were not easily reconciled. Salahieh is the last inhabited place in Egypt where good water is to be found. The Desert dividing Syria from Egypt begins there. Ibrahim-Bey, with his army, treasure, and women, had just set out from this place as the French entered it. Buonaparte pursued him with the little cavalry he had. A party of 150 Arabs who had been with the Bey, offered to charge with the French and share the booty. Night was coming on; the horses were excessively fatigued, the infantry at a good distance behind; under all these disadvantages, however, the attack was made, which the Mamelukes sustained with the greatest courage. The chief of squadron D'Estrée was mortally wounded. Almost every staff-officer and every hussar was engaged in single combat. Colonel Lasalle dropped his sabre in the midst of the charge; he was expert and fortunate enough to recover it, and remount in time to defend himself against one of the most intrepid of the Mamelukes. Murat, Duroc, Leturcq, Colbert, and Arrighi were all engaged in the thickest of the battle, and were hurried by their impetuosity into imminent danger. The French took two pieces of cannon and fifty camels, loaded with tents and other booty. Ibrahim-Bey, who was wounded in the action, pursued his way across the Desert. Buonaparte left General Reynier's division and the engineer officers at Salahieh to construct a fort; and set out on his return to Cairo. He had not gone above two leagues from Salahieh, when he was met by General Kleber's aide-de-camp bringing intelligence of the loss of the battle in Aboukir roads. The messenger had been eleven days on his journey; and this was the first news Buonaparte received of that event, which gave a severe blow to his hopes of success. However, he repaired to Cairo,

where he remained for a considerable time, endeavouring to make the most of the means that were left to him. His activity appears to have been always the same, neither relaxed by good fortune nor discouraged by failure ; and indeed he seems to have had no sort of objection to attempt the reconciling of contradictions and tampering with hopeless materials, their very impracticability irritating his self-will and giving scope to his ingenuity and a number of expedients. To contrive and to will were the first necessities of his soul ; to succeed, unless by extraordinary and arduous means, was only the second.

A great deal of what he did (though probably all that he could do in the actual circumstances) may be accounted for on this principle of wilfulness and contradiction. There is no end of the art and energy employed, and the only fault to be found is that they are thrown away upon objects on which they can produce no corresponding effect, or resemble the ingenious manœuvres of a masterly chess-player to win a game that is irrecoverably lost. He goes over the ground again, long after the event, with the same precaution and pertinacity as ever, showing that in spite of appearances the whole might have succeeded in the end, if some new disaster had not happened ; though where so many *ifs* concur to the execution of a measure, they necessarily put a decided negative upon its ultimate success. Thus he seems to have written those studied letters to Achmet Pacha to persuade him he did not come into his country as an enemy, for no other reason than that these fine assurances would not be believed. He proportioned his own subtlety and craftiness of address to the duplicity and hollowness of those with whom he had to deal, encountering the wily Arab, the selfish Turk at their own weapons, and sure of being foiled. He sent a flag of truce to summon the governor of a fort, and because his head was struck off, he sent another, who was treated in the same barbarous manner. He did wisely in attacking the Mamelukes,

who were the military power, and in paying court to the Scheiks, who were the civil power: but whatever might be the differences or jealousies between the latter and the former, would they not join together on the first opportunity to expel and revenge themselves on their Christian and European invaders, whom they regarded as dogs in both these capacities? What faith could he have in the Arabs as auxiliaries, whose very aspect is a dusky lie, and who would make use of their temporary submission only to take a long and lasting revenge? It would be no more possible to have any hold on their fierce cunning than to tame the wind—to expect to reap thanks or fidelity for favours conferred would be sowing benefits in the sand. No advantages held out to them or made good could ever counterbalance the difference of colour, dress, manners, religion, nature, and origin. To conquer them would require either immense multitudes or a great length of time; to subdue them by art would require a new system of laws, of manners, of religion, appealing still more strongly to their passions and the infirmities of their nature than the old one, for nothing is a match for long-established prejudice but fanaticism. Novelty alone propagates opinions, as antiquity confirms them. Nothing old can ever be revived; for if it had not been unsuited to the circumstances of the people, it would have been still in existence. The Jewish religion rose and sustained itself by an effort and in opposition to all its neighbours. The Christian religion had been tried and was supplanted by Mahometanism. Its mild genius did not accord with the fierceness of the East. The end and aim of the Christian dispensation is good, that of the Oriental despotisms is power. The spirit of Christianity is sympathy; that of the East exclusive selfishness. The answer to the question, "Who is thy neighbour?" in the Gospel, is he whom you can serve—in other codes, it is he who can be of service to you. When Buonaparte was enraged at a troop of Arabs who had attacked a village in the



neighbourhood of Cairo and murdered one of the fellahs or peasants, a Scheik asked him, with a smile, "Was this fellah thy cousin, that his death should so affect thee?" The good or evil, the right or wrong, the claims, the feelings, or wishes of others are laid out of the question, and nothing is considered as valid, but the power to inflict mischief or its being in some way brought home to yourself. The heart has no place in such a system, where the only object or understood principle is to acquire power and property over others, and to treat them according to your will or caprice (as mere property) without considering their welfare or sufferings, their life or death, as of the smallest moment, and where you are regarded in the same light by others, from the lowest to the highest link in the chain of authority. Hence slavery prevails all over the East ; but Christianity or humanity alike repudiates this idea, which is that of a fellow-creature who is placed on the level of a beast of burden or of an inanimate machine. Hence polygamy, which is making a property of the affections and rejecting an equal right in them. Hence a difference in another particular, namely, that love with us implies not only an object, but one that can return the attachment, and where the pleasure is equal and mutual ; there it seems to imply an object, an appetite merely, but to exclude the idea of reciprocity, or treat it with indifference. To this perversity also the condition of slavery palpably contributes ; for where a despotic power is claimed, where nothing is left to the choice or inclination, the gratification of another becomes a secondary consideration ; and the conquest of the heart not being at all taken into the account, the will creates itself a difficulty and an incentive by a triumph over nature. Buonaparte, in alluding to the speedy decay and degeneracy of the Mameluke races in Egypt, attributes it to a depravity of manners ; and on reasoning upon this subject, does not reason well. He speaks as if all the women in Egypt were old and fat, and the French women alone were light, captivating,

and graceful. This is complimenting the French women at the expense of the sex. Besides, if Lady Wortley Montague speaks truth, the women at Constantinople are as handsome as those of Paris; and Buonaparte himself gives an account of the wife of Murad-Bey, a woman of fifty, as having all the grace, the bewitching tones, and the sweetness and elegance of manners of the most accomplished women in Europe. Nor is external beauty alone, according to our ideas, the proper object of love. A statue of a beautiful woman is an object of admiration, but not of love, because though the pleasure to the eye may be the same, it is itself devoid of feeling. The reasoning on polygamy is also ingenious, but far-fetched. Buonaparte tries to account for the prevalence of polygamy in the East from the difference of colour in the inhabitants, and the desire to overcome the antipathy arising from this circumstance by amalgamating them all in the same family. But there is no natural diversity of colour in Asia more than in Europe or Africa. In Asia women are tawny, as in Europe they are white, and in Africa jet black. If these colours meet more commonly in Asia than in Europe, it is from the practice of sending women from other countries thither as to a mart; which custom itself arises from the practice of polygamy, or the purchase and sale of beauty like any other commodity, and is not the cause of it. Polygamy is common in Africa, where there is no mixture of colours. It is the attendant not of a mixture of colours, but of slavery. It is the fault of Buonaparte's reasoning, that he attributes too much in human affairs to political and final causes, and hardly enough to natural and moral ones.

These violent differences of character and customs, and, as it might seem, even of nature, were sufficient to prevent the French making a very strong moral impression on the inhabitants of Egypt: and as to physical force, they had not enough to keep the population down with a strong hand. To retain possession of Egypt, considered merely as a factory or fort on the

sea-coast, it would be necessary to command the sea ; considered as a kingdom rich in independent resources, it has the back-ground of the Desert, in whose pathless extent and arid sands an army would be lost in attempting to baffle and scatter the barbarians of a thousand cities, of a thousand wilds. The people were too much inured to a different and uniform way of life, either to have occasion for or to set much store by our refinements and comforts, which were neither adapted to their situation nor habits. When Napoleon one day asked the Scheik El-Mondi what was the most useful thing he had taught him in the six months he had been among them—"the most useful thing you have taught me," replied the Scheik, half in jest and half in earnest, "is to drink at my meals!" The Arabs had too little knowledge to be either curious about objects of science or to take any interest in mechanical improvements. They looked upon the scientific men meeting in parties or working in their laboratories, at first as priests and afterwards as alchymists ; nor could they understand the interest the French appeared to take in the Pyramids, except by supposing that these Europeans had some tradition of their having been built by their remote ancestors. The only valuable result of the expedition is the famous work on Egypt got up by these learned men, and published at an immense expense during the first fifteen years of this century. The benefits of science are too remote, too evanescent and too refined to strike a rude and savage people who have most need of them. Again, the deference paid by the General-in-Chief to the manners and customs of the people, his joining in celebrating their feasts, and the respect he expressed for their Prophet, were all well-judged, and excellently adapted to conciliate the good-will of the natives, and prevent their unavoidable repugnance from breaking out into open hostility ; but they were only temporary expedients and palliatives, which required other resources and stronger measures in reserve. To have overcome so many obstacles and given a

popular impulse in his favour, it was necessary to depart from the common course of things and strike the ignorant with wonder and delight—he should have opened the canal of Suez (as was talked of) or by a new mode of irrigation, have doubled the fertility of the Nile and the population of Egypt, or preached a new religion, or rebuilt Palmyra, or allowed the use of wine, or worked miracles, or seemed to work them; but all this would have required time, another age, and faith and fortune led captive to accomplish it. The English and Portuguese occupied only ports, on the sea-coast in India; and having the seas to themselves, had only the natives to contend with, their power eating gradually into the interior like a cancer. After the Portuguese found out the passage by the Cape of Good Hope, the Venetians lost the commerce of the East, which they had carried on by way of Egypt. Even supposing the French to have established themselves in Egypt, does not this fact show that the great traffic would still have been carried on by the old road of the Atlantic and Pacific Ocean, or remained in the hands of the great maritime powers?

Egypt borders on the Nile, and occupies an extent of one hundred and fifty leagues in length, from Elephantina to Cairo, and five in breadth, after which the Nile divides into two branches, and forms the Delta. The valley of the Nile is about equal in surface to a sixth part of ancient France, but it is far more fertile, and is like one continued garden, there being neither rock, mountain, nor waste in it. It never rains in Egypt; the fertility of the country depends entirely on the overflowing of the Nile, which brings a kind of rich loam or slime with it from the mountains of Abyssinia, where it takes its rise, and the year is more or less abundant in proportion as it rises higher or lower. By means of a canal to draw the waters of the Nile into the Great Oasis, a vast kingdom was acquired. The country is remarkably healthy; the nights are cool; a burning sun, never tempered by clouds, scorches up the vapours arising

from the low grounds and marshes, and renders them innocuous. The population of Egypt formerly, in the time of Sesostris and the Ptolemies, and afterwards at the period when it was conquered by the Arabs in the seventh century, was supposed to amount to fifteen or twenty millions. At present, it amounts to between two or three millions; and in half a century will not amount, in all probability, to more than a million and a half, if the present system of administration continues so long. Yet it is said by some persons that the earth is always as full as it can hold, and that government can have no influence in this respect! Egypt was anciently the great mart and thoroughfare of the commerce of the East. This was carried on by way of the Red Sea, and the goods of India were thence transported to Thebes on the banks of the Nile, by the canal of Suez, or conveyed on the backs of camels eighty leagues across the Desert. Alexandria, built by Alexander the Great, was the chief seat and emporium of all this wealth flowing in from both worlds. It was the second city in the Roman empire. It is the only convenient or safe harbour on a coast of fifteen hundred miles, reaching from Tunis, the ancient Carthage, to Alexandretta in Syria. It is situate on one of the ancient mouths of the Nile; but at present the dilapidation and neglect of the canals of the Nile prevent its waters from reaching Alexandria, except at the height of the inundation, when they are collected and preserved in large cisterns, which have a striking appearance. The walls of Alexandria were formerly twelve miles round; it contained 4000 palaces, 4000 baths, 400 theatres, 12,000 shops, and above 50,000 Jews. The Arabs lost 28,000 men in taking it (in the first year of the Hegira). Here is the tomb of Alexander, in searching which the French antiquaries found an elegant little statue in *terra-cotta*, ten or twelve inches in height, dressed after the Greek fashion: near the city were Pompey's Pillar and Cleopatra's famous needles. The architecture of the Egyptian cities

resembles the Asiatic more than the European; and their gardens are full of trees and fountains, but not laid out in any order.

Egypt produces abundance of wheat, rice, and pulse. It was the granary of old Rome, as it is at present that of Constantinople. It also produces sugar, indigo, senna, cassia, nitre, flax, and hemp; but it has neither wood, coal, nor oil. It procures tobacco from Syria, and coffee from Arabia. It feeds numerous flocks, independently of those of the Desert, and a multitude of poultry. The chickens are hatched in ovens, which is an immemorial custom. This country serves as an intermediate link or resting place between Africa and Asia. The caravans arrive at Cairo like ships on a coast, at the moment when they are least expected, and from the most remote quarters. Signals of their arrival are made at Gizeh, and they approach by the Pyramids. At that spot they are informed at what place they are to cross the Nile, and where they are to encamp near Cairo. The caravans thus announced are those of pilgrims or traders from Morocco, Fez, Tunis, Algiers, or Tripoli, going to Mecca and bringing goods to barter at Cairo. They are usually composed of several hundred camels, sometimes even of thousands, and escorted by troops of armed men. Caravans also come from Abyssinia, from the interior of Africa, from Tagoast, and from places in direct communication with the Cape of Good Hope and Senegal. They bring slaves, gum, gold-dust, elephants' teeth, beautiful negresses from Darfour, and in general all the produce of those countries, which they exchange for the merchandise of Europe and of the Levant. The French, English, or any other nation established in Egypt, would soon have to supply the wants of the inhabitants of the Deserts of Africa, Abyssinia, Arabia, and a great part of Syria, and in return might obtain from Egypt, wheat, rice, sugar, nitre, and all the productions of Africa and Asia.

There is neither coach nor cart in Egypt. The

facility of water-carriage supersedes the use of them; and the camel is used to cross the Desert and as the ordinary beast of burthen. The horses are the finest in the world. Buonaparte's coachman, Cæsar, astonished the natives by his dexterity in driving his carriage with six fine horses through the narrow streets of Cairo and Boulac. He himself speaks of this circumstance with no small complacency. Even the greatest minds are not unwilling to derive admiration from accident and at a little expense of exertion. Lord Byron endeavoured to make the Italians stare by galloping through the streets of Venice on the only *live* horse ever seen there.

A spring of water, a patch of verdure, a tent, his camels, his horse, and a herd of cattle, are all that the Arab possesses. Water is the first of necessities in the Desert, and indeed throughout the East; and the Prophet has in a manner placed this element under the peculiar protection of religion. To dig a canal or a well, or to erect a fountain, are considered as works not only of great merit, but as acts of piety. Let us not run away with an idea that all is wrong, because it is barbarous or unlike ourselves. There is a limit which neither good nor evil can pass; the excess of everything produces its contrary. Slavery in the East, by being absolute and universal, has its necessary, practical alleviations; otherwise it could not be borne. Slaves are admitted as a part of the family; marry their masters, or rise to the highest offices in the state; for where all are slaves, all are equal. Cruelty and distress naturally produce humanity and compassion, and hospitality is the child of the Desert. Charity and alms are recommended in every part of the Koran, as the means of being most acceptable to God and the Prophet. Charity is so far the offspring of the parsimony of nature and the ravages of power. At the appointed hour the Mussulmans say their prayers, wherever they may happen to be, or whatever business they are engaged in; the slaves spread

the carpets before them, and they kneel with their faces towards the East. At the feast of Ramadan (says Voltaire) the Mahomedans sing and pray five times a day, and then fall to cutting each other's throats with the greatest good-will imaginable. Nor let this be imputed as a slur upon religion, but as a redeeming trait in human nature, of which it stands in need. Instead of showing the fallacy and nullity of the *ideal* principle, it shows its universality and indestructible character. Man can no more divest himself entirely of the ethereal particle, the *divinæ particula auræ*, than of the grossness of his nature, however the one or the other may predominate. The Moor or wild Arab who laughs at human ties, who is the slave of headstrong passions or of sordid interest, is still tamed by certain talismanic words written in his sacred books; eyes the golden chain let down from Paradise to him with wonder and delight; is dangled in this film, this cobweb of his brain like a puppet; and his savage and mere animal nature is cowed and subjected by his higher imaginative and abstracted nature, just as he himself curbs and bends the camel or the wild ass of the Desert to his purposes!

The General-in-Chief went to celebrate the feast of the Prophet at the house of the Scheik El-Bekir. The ceremony was begun by the recital of a kind of litany, containing the life of Mahomet from his birth to his death. About a hundred Scheiks sitting in a circle, on carpets, with their legs crossed, recited all the verses, swinging their bodies violently backwards and forwards, and all together. A magnificent dinner was afterwards served up, at which the guests sat on carpets with their legs across. There were twenty tables, and five or six people at each table. That of the General-in-Chief and the Scheik El-Bekir was in the middle: a little slab of a precious kind of wood, ornamented with mosaic work, was raised eighteen inches above the floor, and covered with a great number of dishes in succession. There were pilaws of rice,



a particular kind of roasted meat, *entrées*, and pastry, all very highly spiced. The Scheiks\* picked everything with their fingers; accordingly, water was brought to wash their hands three times during dinner. Gooseberry-water, lemonade, and other sorts of sherbet were served to drink, and abundance of conserves and confectionery with the dessert. The dinner was not disagreeable to the French guests; it was only the manner of eating it that seemed strange to them. In the evening, the whole city of Cairo was illuminated. After dinner the party went into the square of El-Bekir; the illumination of which, in coloured glass, was exceedingly beautiful. An immense concourse of people were present. They were all placed in order, in ranks of from twenty to a hundred persons, who, standing close together, recited the prayers and litany of the Prophet, with movements which kept increasing until at length they became quite convulsive, and some of the most zealous fainted away. In the course of the year, the General-in-Chief often accepted invitations to dinner with the Scheik Sadda, the Scheik Fayon, and others of the principal Scheiks. The days chosen were different festivals. The same magnificence prevailed at all their entertainments, which were conducted in nearly a similar manner.

Buonaparte did not ever (as has been madly asserted) pretend to be a convert to the Mahometan religion; he merely avowed what he probably felt, a high opinion of its founder, and treated its ceremonies with respect and decorum. There seems, however, at one time, to have been a sort of tampering on the subject, as if he had a desire to become a *catechumen*: and the points of abstinence from wine and circumcision were stated as difficulties in the way of such an arrangement, which the Scheiks however thought might be dispensed with, as not essential parts of the religion. This was not good policy; instead of de-

\* The Doctors of the Law, descended from the Arabs and the Prophet.

ceiving these subtle and sagacious casuists, it would give them a bad opinion of the sincerity of the French commander in other respects. To turn renegade was more than was requisite to be admitted into the country on a friendly or mercantile footing ; to conquer it, it was not enough. If their religion was so excellent as to call for this mark of acquiescence, it was probable that their laws and government were not so bad as to require remodelling by the hands of strangers ; and before you can pretend to overturn an empire, it is absolutely necessary to prove that you are either stronger or wiser than the conquered. Half-measures will not do for extreme cases ; and where there is a total antipathy of sentiment and maxims, one party or the other must be masters. Buonaparte's soldiers, though superior to any opposed to them, were a mere handful compared to the field over which they had to act, and must in the end have bit the dust ; and their chief does not appear to have possessed any spell or talismanic power in his breast to kindle a flame through the East or tame its raging fires. His breath had not the force to stir up the sun-burnt population of Asia like a cloud of dust, and send it before him like a whirlwind ; and without this, it must be "blown stifling back upon himself !" So far from propagating new principles of civilization in the East, it was his object to crush and neutralise them at home ; and instead of commencing and giving full scope to a new era in society, to patch up and lengthen out the old one, which had fallen in pieces from its own imperfections and infirmity. Bacchus scattered god-like gifts and civilization in the East, and returned from the conquest of India, drawn by panthers, and followed by troops of wild men and women. Alexander overturned barbaric thrones by martial discipline, and fell a martyr to the intoxication of his own pride and passions. Buonaparte was stopped by a dismantled fort and an English cruiser ; and turned back to found an empire in the West, which fell upon the founder's head because it was neither new nor old !

While the General-in-Chief merely conformed to the established worship in outward appearance and from policy, General Menou became a convert in good earnest, turned Mahometan, and married a lady of Rosetta, whom he treated after the French modes of gallantry. He gave her his hand to enter the dining-room, the best place at table, the choicest dishes ; or if she dropt her handkerchief he ran to pick it up. She related these circumstances in the bath at Rosetta, where all the women meet ; and the rest, in hopes of a change in the national manners, signed a petition to Sultan Kebir, or the Fire-King (so they called Buonaparte), that their husbands should be obliged to treat them in the same manner. A revolution of the harem might not have been the least feasible project thought of. The women in the East always wear a veil or a piece of cloth to hide their faces. If taken by surprise, they will make use of any other part of their dress sooner than let their faces be exposed. Marriage in general takes place without either party having seen the other ; or at least without the husband having seen the wife. The dress of the Oriental people is both becoming, easy, and magnificent. Their necks and limbs are not confined by bandages or garters ; a native of the East may remain a month in his clothes without feeling fatigued by them. The little hats of the French, their tight breeches, close coats, and the stocks which strangled them, were, as they well might be, objects of laughter and aversion to them. The freedom and looseness of the female dress makes a greater contrast in this respect in Europe ; and the use of the beard in remote climes or periods may be supposed to date the distinction of manhood more pointedly from its growth.

The plague appears first on the coast of Egypt, and occurs always in winter. When it broke out, the army adopted the precautions used at Marseilles ; which were wholly unknown to the natives, but of the utility of which they became at length sensible. Egypt is in general extremely healthy, and the soldiers

were chiefly incommoded by diseases of the eyes. This disorder is attributed to two causes, first the sand and dust, and, secondly, to the checking of the perspiration, produced by very cold nights succeeding very hot days. It is evidently owing in some way to the climate. St. Louis, on his return from the Holy Land in 1250, brought back a multitude of blind; and it was this circumstance that gave rise to the establishment of the hospital of the *Quinze Vingts* at Paris.

Egypt is divided from Syria to the east by the Great Desert, which is seventy-five leagues, or seven days' journey across.

## CHAPTER XX.

## THE BATTLES IN 1799 IN SYRIA.

Opening of the campaign in Syria ; the army crosses the desert to El Arisch : Ghezzar Pacha's camp taken ; the vanguard loses its way ; sufferings in consequence ; Gaza entered ; Jaffa invested, stormed, and pillaged ; energetic letters of Napoleon to the inhabitants of Palestine and to Ghezzar Pacha ; alleged massacre and poisoning at Jaffa ; Napoleon accused of these transactions.

BUONAPARTE remained during the rest of the year 1798 at Cairo, ripening his plans, and watching the progress of events. Soon after the battle of the Nile, the Porte, no longer kept in awe by the French fleet, or else alarmed for its possessions in the East, declared war against France. In the beginning of 1799 the Turkish armies assembled, one at Rhodes, the other in Syria, in order to attack the French in Egypt. They were to act in concert in the month of May, the first by landing at Aboukir, the second by crossing the Desert which divides Syria from Egypt. In the beginning of January news arrived that Ghezzar Pacha had been appointed Seraskier of the army of Syria ; that his vanguard, under the command of Abd-oullah, had already arrived at El-Arisch, and was occupied in repairing the fort, which may be considered as the key of Egypt on the Syrian side. A train of artillery of forty guns, served by 1200 cannoneers in the European manner, had been landed at Jaffa ; considerable magazines were conveyed to that town, by means of vessels from Constantinople ; and at Gaza stores of skins to hold water had been collected, sufficient it was said to enable a large army to cross the Desert.

Had the French remained stationary, they would have been attacked by both armies at once; and it was also to be apprehended that the Turks would shortly be joined by a body of European troops. Thus hemmed in, the French would have no retreat open to them by sea, as they had no fleet; and by land, the Desert of seventy-five leagues, which separates Syria from Egypt, was not passable by an European army in the height of the hot season. It was, therefore, the business of the French general to anticipate his enemies, to cross the Great Desert during the winter, to possess himself by a *coup-de-main* of the magazines which had been formed on the coast of Syria, and to attack, and if possible to destroy the different troops in succession as fast as they collected. In consequence of this plan, the divisions of the army of Rhodes were obliged to hasten to the relief of Syria; and Egypt not being threatened on that side remained quiet, which allowed the French to march the greater part of their troops into Syria. Had the attack on Acre succeeded, Buonaparte had it in contemplation (at least as no impossible event) to have menaced Constantinople with an army of 25,000 French, and 100,000 auxiliaries, Arabs, Copts, the Druses of Mount Lebanon, the Christians of Syria; and after establishing an amicable understanding with the Porte, to march on the Indus and effect the conquest of India. The object of the expedition would thus have been completely fulfilled by driving the English out of their Eastern possessions; but this splendid structure was built on the sand. Buonaparte had already tried to open a communication with Tippoo Saib, by a letter dated the 25th January in this year; but of course the negotiation never came to any thing. On the 9th of February, a little before he left Cairo, it appears by a letter to the Executive Directory, that he had celebrated the commencement of the Ramadan with the greatest pomp, and performed the same functions as were performed by the Pacha on that occasion. General Desaix was at this

period in Upper Egypt fighting with Murad-Bey, 160 leagues from Cairo, near the Cataracts, where he had explored the ruins of Thebes; General Bon was at Suez. Buonaparte, in all his letters to the Directory, manifests great uneasiness at not hearing news from France, respecting which he seems to have been kept, either by design or accident, very much in the dark. A Ragusan ship which arrived at Alexandria, having on board one Citizen Hamelin with some broken files of Italian journals, gave him a new light on the subject. "*If*," he writes to the Executive Directory, "*in the course of March, Citizen Hamelin's report should be confirmed to me, and France should be at war with the kings, I shall return to Europe.*" He at the same time urges the necessity of reinforcements, and complains of the number of enemies he has to contend with—Deserts, inhabitants of the country, Arabs, Mamelukes, Russians, Turks, and English.

Buonaparte had addressed two letters to Ghezzar Pacha in the latter end of the preceding year: the only answer he gave was in the first instance to use the messenger ill, and in the second to cut his head off. The French at Acre were seized and treated in a barbarous manner. The Pacha also issued a number of proclamations, in which he called on the people of Egypt to revolt, and announced his speedy approach. Some months after his vanguard took up a position at El-Arisch, a fort situated on the borders of the Desert, six leagues within the Egyptian territory. The French general no longer hesitated, but determined to carry the war into the enemy's country without delay. On the 4th of February General Reynier joined the vanguard under General Lagrange, stationed at Catieh, three days' journey in the Desert, where Buonaparte had ordered considerable magazines to be collected, and where General Kleber soon after arrived from Damietta. Two days after, the army set out from Catieh on its march across the Desert to El-Arisch, during which for several

days no water was to be found. The difficulties which arose on every side were borne with great patience; and the enemy was attacked and driven from the village of El-Arisch, and the whole of his vanguard shut up in the fort. In the meantime, Ghezzar Pacha's cavalry, with a body of infantry, having got into the rear of the army, and taken up a position about a league off, Kleber directed General Reynier to make a sudden movement, and at midnight the enemy's camp was surrounded, attacked, and taken, with a quantity of baggage and several prisoners. It was necessary to open regular trenches before the fort; a heavy cannonade was commenced against it. On the 18th, at noon, a practicable breach was made, and the commandant was summoned to surrender; which he did. Three hundred horses, much biscuit and rice were found at El-Arisch, together with 500 Albanians, 500 Maugrebins, and 200 men from Adonia and Caramania. The Maugrebins entered into the French service, and Buonaparte made an auxiliary corps of them. On leaving El-Arisch, the vanguard lost its way in the Desert, and suffered much for want of water. The provisions failing, the troops were obliged to eat horses, mules, and camels. On the 24th they came to the pillars placed to mark the boundaries of Africa and Asia, and lay that night in Asia. The following day the army marched on Gaza; and at ten in the morning saw 3000 or 4000 cavalry advancing towards them. Murat's cavalry having passed a number of torrents in sight of the enemy, Kleber's division and Lannes's light infantry, which supported the movement of the cavalry, charged the enemy near the height which overlooks Hebron, and where Samson carried off the gates of Gaza. The Mussulmans did not await the charge, but fell back, having some men killed, among others the Pacha's Kiaya. The 22nd light infantry behaved extremely well, and followed the cavalry running, though many days had elapsed since they had made a good meal, or drunk their fill of water. Gaza contained powder, military



stores, shells, implements, vast supplies of biscuit, and six pieces of cannon.

The weather now became dreadful, with thunder and rain, the first the army had encountered since its leaving Europe. February 28, they slept at Esdud, the ancient Azoth, and on the 29th at Rameh, which the enemy had evacuated precipitately, leaving behind him 100,000 rations of biscuit, a still greater quantity of barley, and 1500 water-skins, which Ghezzar had prepared in order to pass the Desert.

Kleber's division was the first that invested Jaffa; Bon and Lannes came up afterwards. The town was defended by about forty pieces of cannon, which were unmasked from all points, and kept up a well-sustained fire. On the 6th of March, the French having fixed their batteries and mortars, the garrison made a *sortie*: a crowd of men, in various costumes, and of all colours, were then seen marching out, Maugrebins, Albanians, Kurds, Natolians, Caramanians, Damascenes, natives of Aleppo, and blacks from Tekrour. They were, however, briskly repulsed, and returned with more expedition than they came. Duroc, at that time aide-de-camp to the General-in-Chief, particularly distinguished himself in this adventure. At break of day Buonaparte caused the Governor to be summoned, who had his messenger's head struck off, and sent no answer. At seven o'clock the firing commenced, and in an hour Buonaparte judged the breach practicable. General Lannes made the dispositions for the assault. The Adjutant-General's assistant, Neterwood, and ten carbineers first mounted the breach, followed by three companies of grenadiers, under General Rambaud. At five the assailants were masters of the town, which was for twenty-four hours given up to pillage and all the horrors of war. Four thousand of Ghezzar's soldiers were put to the sword, and a number of the inhabitants were massacred.

In the course of a few days several ships arrived from St. Jean d'Acre with military stores and pro-

visions; they were seized in the port. Abd-Oullah, Ghezzar's general, had the address to conceal himself among the people from Egypt, and to go and throw himself at Buonaparte's feet. The latter sent to Damascus and Aleppo more than 500 persons belonging to those two cities, as well as between 400 and 500 persons into Egypt. He pardoned the Mamelukes and Kiaschefs whom he took at El-Arisch; he pardoned also Omar-Mackran, Scheik of Cairo; he was merciful towards the Egyptians as well as towards the people of Jaffa, but severe towards the garrison which suffered itself to be taken with arms in its hands. The French found at Jaffa fifty pieces of cannon, thirty of which were of European make, besides immense stores of provisions. The siege was conducted by Caffarelli, who afterwards fell at Acre: Colonel Lejeune, who was killed in mounting the breach, was deeply regretted by his corps and by the army.

It was from Jaffa that Buonaparte dated two of his most famous letters, the one addressed to the inhabitants of Palestine, the other to Ghezzar Pacha; which deserve insertion here, as specimens of his manner of adopting the energetic and imposing style of Eastern composition. They are as follows:—

*“General Buonaparte to the Scheiks, Ulemas, and other Inhabitants of the Provinces of Gaza, Ramleh, and Jaffa.*

“Jaffa, 19th Ventose, year VII.  
March 9, 1799.

“God is forgiving and merciful!

“I write the present letter to inform you that I am come into Palestine to drive out the Mamelukes and the army of Ghezzar Pacha.

“By what right has Ghezzar extended his inroads into the provinces of Jaffa, Ramleh, and Gaza, which are no part of his Pachaship? Or by what right did he send his troops to El-Arisch? He has provoked

me to war ; I have brought it to him : but it is not on you, inhabitants, that I intend to inflict its horrors.

“Remain quiet in your homes ; let those who have quitted them through fear return to them ; I will grant to every one the property he possesses.

“It is my intention that the Cadis shall continue their functions as usual, and dispense justice : that religion, in particular, shall be protected and revered ; and that the mosques shall be frequented by all good Mussulmans ; it is from God that all good things come ; it is he who gives the victory.

“It is proper that you should know that all human efforts are useless against me ; for all that I undertake is destined to succeed. Those who declare themselves my friends, prosper ; those who declare themselves my enemies, perish. The example of what has just occurred at Jaffa and Gaza, ought to teach you that if I am terrible to my enemies, I am kind to my friends, and, above all, benevolent and merciful to the poor.

(Signed)

BUONAPARTE.”

The letter to Ghezzar Pacha bears the same date, and runs thus :—

“Since my entrance into Egypt I have several times informed you that it was not my intention to make war upon you, but that my only object was to drive out the Mamelukes : you have not answered any of the proposals I have made to you.

“I apprised you that I wished you to remove Ibrahim-Bey from the frontiers of Egypt ; but far from doing so, you have sent troops to Gaza, collected great magazines, published on all sides that you were about to enter Egypt ; and at length carried this invasion into effect by sending 2000 of your men to the fort of El-Arisch, six leagues within the territory of Egypt. It then became incumbent on me to set out from Cairo, and bring home to you the war which you seem to provoke.

“The provinces of Gaza, Ramleh, and Jaffa are

in my power. I have treated those of your troops who placed themselves at my mercy with generosity : I have treated those who had violated the laws of war with severity. I shall march in a few days on St. Jean d'Acre. But why should I deprive an old man whom I do not know, of a few years of life ? What signify a few leagues more by the side of the countries I have conquered ? And since God gives me the victory, I will, like him, be forgiving and merciful, not only towards the people, but towards the great also.

“ You have no real reason to be my enemy, for you were the foe of the Mamelukes. Your Pachaship is separated from Egypt by the provinces of Gaza and Ramleh, and by immense deserts. Become my friend once more, be the enemy of the Mamelukes and English, and I will do you as much good as I have done and can do you harm. Send me your answer by a man furnished with full powers and acquainted with your intentions. Let him present himself to my vanguard with a white flag : I give an order to my staff to send you a safe conduct, which you will find annexed.

“ On the 24th of this month I shall march against St. Jean d'Acre ; I must therefore have your answer before that day.

(Signed)

BUONAPARTE.”

With the name of Jaffa are connected two of the ugliest charges ever brought against Buonaparte, those of massacring the Turkish prisoners and poisoning his own troops in the hospital there ; which were for a long time repeated with no less confidence than success, and which have since been proved, and indeed acknowledged by the persons chiefly concerned in propagating them, to be as groundless as they were odious. The truth with respect to each of them appears to have been this, which cannot be given better than in his own words :—

“ I asked the Emperor then if he had ever read Miot's History of the Expedition to Egypt ? ‘ What,

the Commissary?' he replied; 'I believe Las Cases gave me a copy; moreover, it was published in my time.' He then desired me to bring the one which I had, that he might compare them. He observed, 'Miot was a *polisson*, whom, together with his brother, I raised from the dirt. He says that I threatened him for writing the book, which is a falsehood. I said to his brother once that he might as well not have published untruths. He was a man who had always fear before his eyes. What does he say about the poisoning affair and the shooting at Jaffa?' I replied, that as to the poisoning, Miot declared he could say no more than that such had been the current report; but that he positively asserted that he (Napoleon) had caused between three and four thousand Turks to be shot some days after the capture of Jaffa. Napoleon answered, 'It is not true that there were so many. I ordered about a thousand or twelve hundred to be shot, which was done. The reason was, that amongst the garrison of Jaffa a number of Turkish troops were discovered whom I had taken a short time before at El-Arisch, and sent to Bagdad upon their parol not to serve again or to be found in arms against me for a year. I had caused them to be escorted twelve leagues on their way to Bagdad by a division of my army. But those Turks, instead of proceeding to Bagdad, threw themselves into Jaffa, defended it to the last, and cost me a number of brave men to take it, whose lives would have been spared, if the others had not reinforced the garrison of Jaffa. Moreover, before I attacked the town, I sent them a flag of truce. Immediately afterwards we saw the head of the bearer elevated on a pole over the wall. Now if I had spared them again, and sent them away upon their parol, they would directly have gone to St. Jean d'Acre, where they would have played me over again the same trick that they had done at Jaffa. In justice to the lives of my soldiers, as every general ought to consider himself as their father and them as his children, I could not allow this. To leave as a guard a portion

of my army, already small and reduced in number in consequence of the breach of faith of those wretches was impossible. Indeed, to have acted otherwise than I did, would probably have caused the destruction of my whole army. I therefore, availing myself of the rights of war, which authorise putting to death prisoners taken under such circumstances, independent of the right given to me by having taken the city by assault, and that of retaliation on the Turks for having slaughtered my messenger, ordered that the prisoners taken at El-Arisch, who in defiance of their capitulation had been found bearing arms against me, should be singled out and shot. The rest, amounting to a considerable number, were spared. I would,' continued he, 'do the same thing again to-morrow, and so would any general commanding an army under similar circumstances.'

" 'Previous to leaving Jaffa,' continued Napoleon, 'and after the greatest number of the sick and wounded had been embarked, it was reported to me that there were some men in the hospital so dangerously ill as not to allow of their being removed. I immediately ordered the chiefs of the medical staff to consult together on what was best to be done, and to deliver their opinion on the subject. Accordingly they met, and found that there were seven or eight men so dangerously ill, that they conceived it impossible for them to recover; and also that they could not exist twenty-four or thirty-six hours longer; that moreover, being afflicted with the plague, they would spread that disease amongst all those who approached them. Some of them, who were sensible, perceiving that they were about to be abandoned, demanded with earnest entreaties to be put to death. Larrey was of opinion that recovery was impossible, and that these poor fellows could not exist many hours; but as they might linger long enough to be alive when the Turks entered, and be subjected to the dreadful tortures which they were accustomed to inflict upon their prisoners, he thought it would be an act of charity to

comply with their desires and accelerate their end by a few hours. Desgenettes did not approve of this, and replied that his profession was to cure the sick and not to despatch them. Larrey came to me immediately afterwards, informed me of the circumstances and of what Desgenettes had said, adding that perhaps Desgenettes was right. But, proceeded Larrey, those men cannot live for more than a few hours, twenty-four or thirty-six at most, and if you will leave a rearguard of cavalry to stay and protect them from advanced parties, that will be sufficient. Accordingly I ordered four or five hundred cavalry to remain behind, and not to quit the place until all were dead. They did remain, and informed me that all had expired before they left the town ; but I have heard since, that Sidney Smith found one or two alive when he entered it. This is the truth of the business. Wilson himself, I dare say, knows now that he was mistaken. Sir Sidney Smith never asserted anything of the kind. I have no doubt that this story of the poisoning originated in something said by Desgenettes, who was a *bavard*, which was afterwards misconceived or incorrectly repeated. Desgenettes was, however, a good man, and notwithstanding his having given rise to this story, I was not offended, and had him near my person in different campaigns afterwards. Not that I think it would have been a crime had opium been administered ; on the contrary I think it would have been a virtue. To leave a few unfortunate beings who could not recover, in order that they might be massacred by the Turks with the most dreadful torments, as was their custom, would, I think, have been cruelty. A general ought to act with his soldiers as he would wish should be done to himself. Now, would not any man under similar circumstances, who retained his senses, have preferred dying easily a few hours sooner, rather than expire under the tortures of those barbarians ? You have been amongst the Turks and know what they are ; I ask you now to place yourself in the situation of one of those sick men, and

that you were asked which you would prefer ; to be left to suffer the tortures of those miscreants, or to have opium administered to you ?' I replied, most undoubtedly I should prefer the latter. 'Certainly, so would any man,' answered Napoleon ; 'if my own son (and I believe I love my son as well as any father does his child) were in a similar situation with those men, I would advise it to be done ; and if so situated myself, I would insist upon it, if I had sense enough and strength enough left to demand it. But, however, affairs were not so pressing as to prevent my leaving a party to take care of them, which was done. If I had thought such a measure as that of giving opium unavoidable, I should have called a council of war, have stated the necessity of it, and have published it in the order of the day. It should have been no secret. Do you think that if I had been capable of secretly poisoning my soldiers (as doing a necessary action secretly would give it the appearance of a crime), or of such barbarities as driving my carriage over the dead or the still bleeding bodies of the wounded, that my troops would have fought for me with an enthusiasm and an affection without a parallel ? No, no. I never should have done so a second time. They would have shot me in passing. Even some of the wounded, who had sufficient strength left to pull a trigger, would have dispatched me.'"

Such is the account given by O'Meara of Buonaparte's conversation with him on this subject, which, independently of other proof, carries its own evidence with it. Yet this was one of those charges which, insisted upon for a number of years with every circumstance of aggravation, gangrened the public mind and swelled the war-whoop against him, whenever a plea was wanted. In proportion to the odiousness of the imputation was the natural horror it excited, and the firm conviction entertained of the truth of this phantom of a heated imagination. The English are too ready to give ear to charges against their enemies ; and from this weakness in their character, every adven-



turer who can bring an idle tale against a formidable opponent or with the aid of half-a-dozen venal scribes stigmatize him with an opprobrious nickname, can inflame the national hostility and prejudices to a state bordering on madness, and wield the power of ten or twelve millions of people to any purpose, either of right or wrong, that the government pleases. This is a dangerous engine ; and the handle that has been made of it in this instance among others should shame us out of the use of it. Napoleon attributes to the great Lord Chatham a saying on this subject, that "if the government were to deal fairly or justly with France, England would not exist for four-and-twenty hours." It looks as if this sentiment were not peculiar to him ; but it has been acted upon with tenfold virulence and still more pernicious effect in our time.

His real behaviour to the sick at Jaffa, and the imminent peril to which he exposed himself to calm the fears of the army at the infection which broke out among them, form a striking contrast to the foregoing calumny. The soldiers in the pillage of the place having plundered the houses of a number of articles of Turkish dress which were infected, this produced the plague among them. The following day the General-in-Chief gave orders that every soldier should bring his booty into the square, when all the articles of wearing apparel were burnt. But the disease had been already communicated. He caused the sick to be immediately conveyed to the hospitals, where those infected with the plague were carefully separated from the rest. For a short time he succeeded in persuading the troops that it was only a fever with swellings, and not the plague ; and in order to convince them of it, he went publicly to the bedside of a soldier who was infected, and touched him. This had a great effect in encouraging the men ; and even some of the surgeons, who had abandoned them, became ashamed and returned to their duties.

## CHAPTER XXI.

## ST. JEAN D'ACRE AND ALEXANDRIA.

Siege of St. Jean d'Acre; curious method of obtaining ammunition; the French raise the siege; sketch of Sir Sidney Smith; devotion of the French soldiery to Napoleon; revolts of the Arabs; a fanatical Dernish raises a force, and attacks the French; he is defeated, and fifteen hundred of his followers shot; the French repass the desert into Egypt; dispersion of the revolted Beys; Aboukir taken by the English and Turkish gun-boats; concentration of the French forces; battle of Aboukir; Buonaparte leaves Egypt for France, and entrusts Kleber with his command; Kleber is assassinated, and Menou succeeds him; Menou defeated by Sir Ralph Abercrombie at Aboukir, and compelled to evacuate Egypt; admiration of the Arabs for Napoleon.

JAFFA is situated between Gaza and St. Jean d'Acre, the road to which runs nearly along the sea-shore, close by Mount Carmel, on the top of which there is a convent and fountain, and a rock with the print of a man's foot, which tradition gives out to have been left by Elijah when he ascended to heaven. The heights of Richard Cœur-de-Lion are about half a mile from it.

The siege of St. Jean d'Acre began on the 20th of March; and from this period till the 1st of April the battering-train consisted of one thirty-two-pounder carronade, which Major Lambert had taken at Caiffa by seizing the long-boat of the Tiger by main force; but it was not possible to make use of it with the carriage belonging to the boat, and besides, there were no cannon-balls. These difficulties speedily vanished. In twenty-four hours the park of artillery constructed a carriage. As for balls, Sir Sidney Smith took upon himself to provide them. A few horsemen or waggons made their appearance from time to time; upon which

the English Commodore\* approached, and poured in an alternate fire from all his tiers; and the soldiers, to whom the director of the park paid five *sous* for every ball, immediately ran to pick them up. They were so much accustomed to this manœuvre that they would go and fetch them in the midst of the cannonade and of the shouts of laughter it occasioned. Sometimes the construction of a battery was pretended to be begun. Thus the besiegers obtained twelve and thirty-two pounder balls. They had powder, which had been brought from Cairo, and more had been found at Jaffa and Gaza. The total of their means in the way of artillery amounted only to four twelve-pounders, provided with two hundred rounds each, eight howitzers, a thirty-two pounder carronade, and thirty four-pounders. The engineer, General Samson, being ordered to reconnoitre the town, reported incorrectly that there was neither counterscarp nor ditch, from having in the night reached a wall, which he had mistaken for the rampart. A breach was made in this wall, and fifteen sappers and twenty-five grenadiers, with Adjutant-General Laugier at their head, were ordered to clear it, but on coming out on the other side, were stopped short by a counterscarp of fifteen feet and a ditch several yards in width. Five or six of the assailants were wounded, and the rest, pursued by a dreadful fire of musketry, regained the trench precipitately. A miner was immediately set to work to blow up the counterscarp. In three days the mine was got ready, under the fire of the ramparts and of a great quantity of mortars, directed by excellent gunners furnished by the English ships, which scattered shells in all directions. The eight-inch mortars and fine pieces which the English had taken at Aboukir, now strengthened the defence of the place. On the 28th the mine was sprung, but only overthrew half of the counterscarp. The staff-

\* Sir Sidney Smith was cruising off Acre with the English fleet, and often entered the town.

officer Mailly was, however, sent forward with twenty-five grenadiers and six sappers, and Laugier with two battalions hastened to support the attack ; but the latter, on reaching the counterscarp, met the grenadiers returning with the news that the trench was too high by some feet, and that Mailly, with several of their comrades, had been killed. When the Turks first saw this young officer fastening the ladder, they were seized with terror and fled to the fort. But the death of Mailly frustrated the whole operation ; Laugier was also killed and considerable loss incurred without any benefit, though the town ought to have been taken at this time, as reinforcements arrived in the garrison by sea daily. Soon afterwards, the counterscarp was blown up by a new mine sunk for that purpose, and continued under the ditch in order to blow up the whole tower, as there was no hope of getting in at the breach, which had been filled up with all sorts of combustibles. The English and Turks stood on the inside, and knocked the few stragglers on the head one by one as they entered. About this time the garrison made a sortie, led on by two hundred English, but they were repulsed and a captain of marines was killed.

It was during the progress of the siege, or in the month of April, that the actions of Canaan, Nazareth, Saffet, and Mount Tabor were fought. The last was that which Kleber admired so much. He had foretold ill-success to Buonaparte, and done all he could to dissuade him from it, but had promised to come up in time to assist him. Buonaparte sat up all night in his tent with the officers sleeping round him. He sat at a table examining maps and measuring distances with a pair of compasses. Every now and then he rose up, went to the opening of the tent, either to breathe the fresh air, or as if to see how the night waned. With the first streak of light he woke the officers, and by ten o'clock he had beaten the Turks, when Kleber arrived just in time to compliment him on his victory.

In the middle of April, Rear Admiral Perrée had arrived at Jaffa with three frigates from Alexandria ; he had landed two mortars and six eighteen-pounders at Tintura. Two were fixed to play upon the little isle that flanked the breach, and the four others were directed against the ramparts and curtains by the side of the tower. On the 25th the mine was sprung, but a chamber under the tower (which had been filled with sand) disappointed the besiegers, and only the part on the outside was blown up. The effect produced was the burying two or three hundred Turks and a few pieces of cannon in the ruins, for they had embattled and occupied every story of the tower. In order to take advantage of the first moment of surprise, thirty men attempted to make a lodgment in the tower, but were unable to proceed beyond the lower stories. On the 26th General Devaux was wounded, and on the 27th Caffarelli died. It was now resolved to evacuate the place, and by directing the batteries against this tottering tower to destroy it altogether. From this period the besieged perceived that if they remained longer on the defensive, they were lost. The imagination of the Turks was struck with terror, and they fancied every spot to be undermined. A reinforcement of 3000 men entered the place, and Phillipeaux, a French emigrant officer, formed lines of counter-attack ; they began at Ghezzer's palace and the right of the front attack. In the space between the two, the most furious contests took place daily ; sorties were made with various success, the besieged sometimes carrying everything before them, and then being driven back again with great loss and disorder. Dismay and death were scattered around. From the narrowness of the space and the numbers engaged, they had hardly room to do all the mischief they would. Sometimes the combatants in the trench, either from the putrid smell or some other cause, being seized with the plague, went mad, did desperate deeds, and fell dead as they fought. On the 1st of May, possession was obtained at peep of dawn of the

most salient point of the counter-attack by twenty French volunteers; and at the same moment the English and Turks made a sortie, which was briskly repulsed in its turn, and several hundreds killed. A mine had been already carried across to the rampart under the ditch, when on the 6th the garrison debouched by a gap covered by the fossé, surprised the mask of the mine, and filled up the well. On the 7th the town received a reinforcement of fresh troops.\* As soon as their approach was made known by signals, it was calculated that according to the state of the wind they could not land for six hours. In consequence of this a twenty-four pounder which had been sent by Rear-Admiral Perrée was immediately brought into play, which battered down a piece of the wall to the right of the tower. At night the French troops fought their way through the breach, and had gained a footing in the place, when the troops which had landed appeared in formidable numbers to renew the battle. Rambaud was killed, and a great many fell with him; Lannes was wounded. The besieged then sallied forth by every gate and took the breach in the rear; but they were attacked in turn and cut off. The prisoners taken were armed with European bayonets and came from Constantinople. Everything appeared so favourable, that on the 10th, at two in the morning, Napoleon ordered a new assault. General Dubois was killed in this last skirmish; and on advancing, Ghezzar's house and all the avenues were found to be so thronged with defenders, that the soldiers could not pass beyond the breach.

Under these circumstances, what was to be done? There seemed no hope of carrying the place by a *coup de main*; new succours were said to be leaving Rhodes; the French, remote as they were from France and Egypt, could not afford fresh losses: they had already 1200 wounded, and the plague was in the

\* Sir Sidney Smith's account is, that these frequent reinforcements were in part imaginary, but that he kept up a continual report of them to alarm and discourage the enemy.

hospitals. Accordingly, on the 20th the siege was raised. The resistance made by the place was no doubt owing to a spirit foreign to itself. The attack was obstinate and well directed, and there was a proportionable activity, courage, and readiness of expedient opposed to it. A spirit like Ariel flamed on every part of the walls, and a master-hand was discernible in all the operations. Sir Sidney Smith is a person whose only fault seems to be a constitutional excess of activity and contrivance; but the excess of these qualities is repressed in the presence of the enemy or when life or honour is at stake, and the original impulse remains a useful spur to overcome all obstacles. Buonaparte speaks well of his courage and character, but considers him very eccentric. He attributes the failure of the attack on Acre to his taking the French battering-train, which was on board some small vessels in the harbour. He blames him for making sorties, by which he lost the lives of some hundreds of brave men. He dispersed proclamations among the troops which had the effect of shaking some of them, and Napoleon in consequence published an order, stating that he was *mad*, and forbidding all communication with him. Soon after he sent a lieutenant or a midshipman with a letter containing a challenge to meet him at some place he pointed out, in order to fight a duel. Buonaparte laughed at this, and sent him word back that when he brought Marlborough to fight him, he would think of it. Sir Sidney displayed considerable ability in the treaty for the evacuation of Egypt, and took advantage of the discontent which prevailed amongst the French troops at being so long absent from France, and other circumstances. He also manifested great honour in sending immediately to Kleber to apprise him of Lord Keith's refusal to ratify the treaty, which saved the French army; had he kept it a secret seven or eight days longer, Cairo would have been given up to the Turks, and the French army necessarily obliged to surrender to the English. He also evinced equal

humanity and honour in his behaviour to the French who fell into his hands. He had landed at Havre in consequence of some foolish bet he made that he would go to the theatre without being discovered. He was arrested and confined in the Temple as a spy, and at one time it was intended to try and execute him, as a paltry revenge for the mischief he had done at Toulon. Captain Wright was in a room immediately over his head, and they conversed together by means of signs. Shortly after Buonaparte's return from Italy, he wrote to him from prison, to request that he would intercede for him; but in the circumstances in which he was taken, nothing could be done for him. Buonaparte sums up the character of his fortunate antagonist in these words: "He is active, intelligent, intriguing, and indefatigable; but I believe him to be *mezzo pazzo*."\*

During some part of the siege of Acre, a shell thrown from the garrison fell at Napoleon's feet. Two soldiers who were standing near, seized and closely embraced him, making a rampart of their bodies for him against the effects of the shell, which exploded and covered them with sand. They all three sank into the hole formed by its bursting: one of the soldiers was wounded. He made them both officers. One of them lost his leg at Moscow, and commanded at Vincennes when the Allies entered Paris. When summoned by the Russians to surrender, he replied that as soon as they sent him back the leg he had lost at Moscow, he would give up the fortress. This man came from Perigueux in the Dordogne, and survived his master, whose life he perhaps saved. Many times in his life Buonaparte had been saved by the soldiers and officers throwing themselves before him when he was in the most imminent danger. At Arcol , when he was at the head of a desperate charge, his aide-de-camp, Colonel Muiron, threw himself before his general, covered him with his body, and received the

\* Half-mad.



blow which was aimed at him. "He fell at my feet," says Napoleon, "and his blood spouted up in my face. Never yet, I believe, has there been such devotion shown by soldiers, as mine have manifested for me. In all my misfortunes never has the soldier, even when expiring, been wanting to me—never has man been served more faithfully by his troops. With the last drop of blood gushing out of their veins, they exclaimed *Vive l'Empereur !*"\*

During the expedition into Syria, the inhabitants of Egypt had conducted themselves in an orderly manner. Desaix in Upper Egypt continued to repulse the attacks of the Arabs, and to secure the country from the attempts of Murad-Bey, who made incursions from the Desert of Nubia into different parts of the valley. Sir Sidney Smith had caused a great number of circulars and libels to be printed, which he sent to the generals and commandants who had been left behind in Egypt, proposing to them to return to France, and guaranteeing their passage, if they chose to do so, whilst the Commander-in-Chief was in Syria. These proposals appeared so extravagant that it became the common opinion of the army that the commodore was not in his right senses. General Dugua, who had the command in Lower Egypt, prohibited all intercourse with him, and indignantly rejected his overtures.

\* At the battle of Hanau, General Le Tor, who fell afterwards at the battle of Ligny, and to whose daughter Buonaparte left a legacy, cut his way through a troop of Austrian cavalry to extricate Napoleon, who had been surrounded by them. He received a number of sabre-wounds, and his face was dreadfully scarified. Buonaparte told him, laughing, that if his wife (a handsome English woman) admired him for his beauty, he ought to be afraid of meeting her again. The name of this lady was Newton, and the Emperor used to compliment her by saying that she did as much honour to her country by her grace and beauty as her illustrious namesake had done by his science. Buonaparte entering a wretched hovel in one of his campaigns, and finding some potatoes roasting in the ashes, greedily seized on one; and the other officers (of whom General Le Tor was one) drawing back, he said, "Why don't you help yourselves? Do you think I am to burn my fingers for you?" This cordial familiarity of manners, contrasted with the elevation of power would naturally account for the extreme devotion of his troops.

The French forces in Lower Egypt were daily increased by the arrival of men from the hospitals. The fortifications of Alexandria, Rosetta, Rahmanieh, Damietta, Salahieh, Belbeis, and the different points of the Nile which it had been judged proper to occupy with towers, went on constantly during the winter months. General Dugua had only to repress the incursions of the Arabs and some partial tumults ; the mass of the inhabitants, influenced by the Scheiks and Ulemas, remained satisfied and quiet. The first event which interrupted the general tranquillity was the revolt of Emir-Hadji, or the Prince of the Caravan of Mecca. The General-in-Chief had authorised Emir-Hadji to establish himself in Sharkieh to complete the organization of his household. He had already 300 armed men, but he wanted 800 or 900 to form a sufficient escort for the caravan of the pilgrims on their way to Mecca. He remained faithful to Sultan Kebir (the name always given to Buonaparte in the East) until the battle of Mount Tabor ; but then Ghezzar having succeeded in communicating with him by the coast, and having informed him that the armies of Damascus and the Naplousains were surrounding the French at the camp of Acre, and that the latter, weakened by the siege, were irremediably lost, he began to doubt of the success of the French, and to listen to Ghezzar, wishing to make his peace by rendering him some service. On the 15th of April, having received more false intelligence from an emissary employed by Ghezzar, he announced his revolt by a proclamation published throughout Sharkieh. In this he asserted that Sultan Kebir had been killed before Acre, and the whole of the French army made prisoners. The greater part of the population took no notice of these idle rumours. Five or six villages only displayed the standard of revolt, and the Emir's forces were only increased by 400 horse belonging to a tribe of Arabs. General Lanusse with his moveable column left the Delta, passed the Nile, and marched against Emir-Hadji, whom he succeeded in surrounding.

put to death those who resisted, dispersed the Arabs, and burnt one of the villages as an example. The Emir-Hadji himself escaped with four other persons through the Desert, and reached Jerusalem.

During these occurrences in Sharkieh, others of greater importance were passing in Bahireh. A man of the Desert of Derne, possessed of a great reputation for sanctity amongst the Arabs of his tribe, took it into his head to pretend that he was the angel Elmody, whom the Prophet promises in the Koran to send to the aid of the elect in the most critical emergencies. This man had all the qualities calculated to excite the fanaticism of the multitude. He succeeded in persuading them that he lived without food, and by the especial grace of the Prophet. Every day, at the hour of prayer, and before all the faithful, a bowl of milk was brought to him in which he dipped his fingers, and passed them over his lips; this being, as he said, the only nourishment he took. He had collected a body of 120 followers, inflamed with zeal, with whom he repaired to the Great Oasis, and was there joined by a caravan of pilgrims, consisting of 400 Maugrebins from Fez. He thus found himself at the head of between 500 and 600 men, well-armed, and supplied with camels; and marching on Damanhour, surprised and killed sixty men belonging to the nautical legion. This success increased the number of his partisans. He visited all the mosques of Damanhour and the neighbouring villages, and from the pulpit declared his divine mission, declaring himself incombustible and ball-proof, and giving out that his followers would in like manner have nothing to fear from the muskets and cannon of the French. He enlisted 3000 or 4000 converts in Bahireh, most of whom he armed with pikes and shovels, and exercised them in throwing dust against the enemy, declaring that this blessed dust would frustrate all the efforts of the French against them. Colonel Lefebvre, who commanded at Rahmanieh, left fifty men in the fort, and set out with 200 to

retake Damanhour. The action commenced, and when the fire was briskest, some columns of fellahs outflanked the French, and passed their rear, with their shovels raising clouds of dust. Colonel Lefebvre could do nothing, though a number of the enemy were killed in the skirmish. The wounded and the relatives of those who were slain loudly reproached their leader, who had told them that they were safe from the balls of the French. He silenced these murmurs by quoting the Koran, and by maintaining that none of those who had rushed forward full of confidence in his predictions had been hurt; but that those who had shrunk back had been punished by the Prophet, because they had not faith in their hearts. This excuse, which ought to have opened their eyes, confirmed their belief. He reigned absolute in Damanhour, and there was reason to apprehend the defection would extend to the whole of Bahireh and the neighbouring provinces. General Lanusse speedily crossed the Delta, reached Damanhour, and defeated the troops of the pretended angel Elmody. Those who were unarmed dispersed and fled to their villages. Lanusse fell on the rest of these fanatics without mercy, and shot 1500 of them, amongst whom was their ringleader. He took Damanhour, and Bahireh became pacified.

As soon as it was known that the French army had repassed the Desert, and was returning into Egypt, a general consternation prevailed amongst all those who had sided with the French. The Druses, the Mutualis, the Christians of Syria, and the partisans of Ayer had to make their peace with the Pacha by large pecuniary sacrifices. Ghezzar was become less cruel than formerly; most of his military household had been killed at St. Jean d'Acre, and this old man survived all those whom he had brought up. The plague, which was making great ravages in the town, also increased his troubles, so that he did not go beyond his Pachaship. The Pacha of Jerusalem resumed his possession of Jaffa. Ibrahim-

Bey, with 400 Mamelukes, that he still had left, took up a position at Gaza, and had some skirmishes with the garrison of El-Arisch.

Elphi-Bey, and Osman-Bey, with 300 Mamelukes, 1000 Arabs, and 1000 camels, carrying their wives and their riches, went down through the Desert between the right bank of the Nile and the Red Sea, and reached the Oasis of Sebaïar in the beginning of July. They waited for Ibrahim-Bey, who was to join them at Gaza; and thus united, they wished to induce all Sharkieh to revolt, to penetrate into the Delta, and advance on Aboukir. Brigadier-General Lagrange left Cairo with one brigade and half the dromedary regiment. He came up with the enemy in the night of the 9th of July, and surrounded the camp of Osman-Bey and Elphi-Bey, took their thousand camels and their families, and killed Osman-Bey, five or six Kiaschefs, and 100 Mamelukes. The rest dispersed in the Desert, and Elphi-Bey returned to Nubia. Ibrahim-Bey being informed of this event in time, did not quit Gaza. Murad-Bey with the rest of the Mamelukes, amounting to between 400 and 500 men, arrived in the Fayoum, and thence proceeded by the Desert to Lake Natron, where he expected to be joined by 2000 or 3000 Arabs of Bahireh and of the Desert of Derne, and to march on Aboukir, the place appointed for the landing of the great Turkish army. General Murat set out from Cairo, reached Lake Natron, attacked Murad-Bey, and took a Kiaschef and fifty Mamelukes. Murad-Bey briskly pursued, and having, moreover, no news of the army which was to have landed at Aboukir, but was delayed by the winds, turned back and sought safety in the Desert. In the course of the 13th he reached the Pyramids; it is said that he ascended the highest of them, and remained there part of the day, gazing with his telescope on the houses of Cairo and his fine country-seat at Gizeh. Of all the power of the Mamelukes, he now retained only a few hundred men, disheartened, fugitive, and

miserable. As soon as the General-in-Chief heard of his being there, he instantly set out for the Pyramids; but Murad-Bey plunged into the Desert, making for the Great Oasis. A few camels and some men were taken from him.

On the 14th of July the General-in-Chief heard (at Cairo) that Sir Sidney Smith, with two English ships of the line, several frigates and Turkish men-of-war, and a hundred and twenty sail of transports, had anchored in Aboukir roads on the evening of the 12th. The fort of Aboukir was armed, victualled, and in good condition, with a garrison of 400 men and a commandant that might be depended on. Marmont undertook to defend this fort till the army had time to come up. But this general had committed a great error in not following the directions of the General-in-Chief, who had ordered him to raze the village of Aboukir, and extend the fortifications; instead of which he had taken upon himself to preserve the village, as convenient for cantonments, and had a redoubt constructed on the isthmus, which he thought a sufficient security. On the 14th, the English and Turkish gun-boats entered Lake Maadieh, and cannonaded the redoubt; and when it was thought sufficiently battered, the Turks, sword in hand, mounted to the assault, carried the work, and took or killed the 300 French stationed there. The 100 men that remained in the fort, intimidated by the immense force that surrounded them, surrendered.

In the meantime, as soon as Napoleon was informed of the landing of the Turks, he proceeded to Gizeh and dispatched orders to all parts of Egypt. On the 15th he slept at Wardan, on the 17th at Alham, on the 18th at Shabur, and on the 19th at Rahmanieh, thus performing a journey of forty leagues in four days. The divisions of Murat, Lannes, and Bon marched from Cairo; Kleber came from Damietta; General Reynier, who was in Sharkieh, had orders to leave 600 men to garrison the forts, and to march on Rahmanieh. General Desaix likewise received orders

to evacuate Upper Egypt, to leave the guard of the country to the inhabitants, and to come to Cairo with all possible speed; so that if it should be necessary, the whole army, amounting to 25,000 men, might be in motion to join before Aboukir, where there was every reason to expect not only a Turkish, but an English army, and in the uncertainty of the event, the General-in-Chief took the worst for granted. It was his object to attack and defeat the army which was landing at Aboukir, before that of Syria (supposing such an army to have been collected and to be on its way) could reach Cairo. On arriving at Rahmanieh on the 20th, Napoleon learnt the news of the landing of the troops under Mustapha-Pacha, and of the capture of the redoubt; but that they had not stirred since, either because they were waiting for the junction of the English or for that of Murad-Bey. The fortifications, in constructing which the enemy occupied themselves on the Isthmus of Aboukir, seemed to indicate that they wished to make this point the centre of operations, and to march thence either on Alexandria or Rosetta, according to circumstances. The General-in-Chief in consequence sent General Murat to Birketh, a village at the head of Lake Maadieh, from whence he could fall on the right flank of the Turks if they should make for Rosetta, or on their left flank if they should march on Alexandria.

While the columns were effecting a junction at Rahmanieh, Napoleon visited Alexandria, and found everything in the fortifications in excellent order, for which he gave due praise to the talents and activity of Colonel Cretin. As there was a probability of the English coming up, it was important to attack the Turks separately; but there was a difficulty in this, as it would take several days for the whole army to arrive from such distant points, and as the troops actually assembled and ready to engage did not amount to above 5000 or 6000. Napoleon set out from Alexandria on the 24th, and proceeded to Puits.

half-way across the isthmus, where he encamped and was joined by all the troops that were at Birketh. The Turks, who were without cavalry, could not watch his movements, and some hopes were entertained of surprising the enemy's camp; but this design was frustrated by an accident. A company of sappers escorting a convoy of tools, having left Alexandria late on the 24th, passed the fires of the French army, and fell in with the outposts of the Turks at ten o'clock in the evening. As soon as they perceived their mistake they fled, but ten were taken, from whom the Turks ascertained that the general, with the army, was opposite to them, and the next morning they were prepared for the assault. General Lannes with 1800 men made his dispositions to attack the enemy's left. Destaing with a like number of troops prepared to attack the right; Murat, with all his cavalry and a light battery, was in reserve. The skirmishers of Lannes and Destaing soon engaged with those of the enemy, and the Turks maintained the battle with success, till Murat, having penetrated through their centre, suddenly cut off the communication between their first and second lines. The Turkish troops then lost all confidence, and rushed tumultuously towards their rear. This corps consisted of between 9000 and 10,000 men. The Turkish infantry are brave, but preserve no order, and their muskets are without bayonets; they are moreover deeply impressed with an opinion of their inferiority to cavalry on level ground. Encountered in the midst of the plain by the French cavalry, they could not rejoin their second line; their right was driven towards the sea, and their left towards Lake Maadieh. An unprecedented spectacle now presented itself. The columns of Lannes and Destaing, which had advanced to the heights lately quitted by their adversaries, descended thence at the charge; and these 10,000 men, to escape the pursuit of the infantry and cavalry, threw themselves into the water, and whilst the artillery poured grape-shot upon



them, were almost all drowned. It was said that not more than a score succeeded in swimming to the ships. This extraordinary advantage, obtained with so little loss, gave the General-in-Chief hopes of forcing the second line. Colonel Cretin was sent forward to reconnoitre. The left was found to be the weakest part. Lannes had orders to draw up his troops in columns, and under the protection of the artillery to proceed along the lake, turn the entrenchments, and throw himself into the village. Murat was to follow with his cavalry as before, prepared to execute the same movement; Colonel Cretin, who knew every step of the ground, was to direct their march, and Destaing was instructed to make false movements, to occupy the attention of the enemy's right.

All these dispositions succeeded. Lannes had forced the entrenchments and made a lodgment in the village; but Mustapha-Pacha, who was in the redoubt behind it, at this moment made a sortie with 4000 or 5000 men, and thereby helped to separate the French right from their left, at the same time placing himself in the rear of their right. This movement would have stopped Lannes short; but the General-in-Chief, who was in the centre, marched with the 60th, checked Mustapha's attack, made him give ground, and thereby restored the confidence of General Lannes's troops, who continued their movement, and the cavalry advancing got in the rear of the redoubt. The enemy, finding themselves cut off, fell into the utmost disorder. General Destaing charged on the right, and those who tried to regain the fort falling in with the cavalry, not one Turk would have escaped had it not been for the village, which a considerable number had time to reach and to entrench themselves in it. A great multitude were driven into the sea. Mustapha with all his staff, and a body of from 1200 to 1500 men, were surrounded and made prisoners. It was four in the afternoon when the battle was over. Mustapha-Pacha did not surrender till after making a valiant resistance; he had been wounded in the hand. The

French cavalry had the chief share in the fortune of the day. Murat was wounded in the head by a tromblon shot; Duvivier was killed by a thrust from a kangiar. Cretin was shot dead by a musket-ball, while conducting the cavalry, and Guibert, aide-de-camp to the General-in-Chief, was struck by a ball in the breast and died shortly after the battle. The French loss was 300 men. Sir Sidney Smith, who had chosen the position occupied by the Turkish army, narrowly escaped being taken prisoner, and with some difficulty got on board his sloop. The 60th had behaved ill in an assault at St. Jean d'Acre, and the General-in-Chief had it inserted in the order of the day that they should march across the Desert with their arms reversed, and escorting the sick; by their spirited conduct at the battle of Aboukir they regained their former reputation.

Buonaparte left Egypt for France, which he thought required his presence more, on the morning of the 6th of Fructidor (23rd of August), 1799, and landed at Frejus on the 9th of October. He gave the command of the army, amounting to 28,000 men, to Kleber,\* who at first doubting of Buonaparte's safe arrival, and anxious to quit Egypt, sent over the most

\* HIS LETTER TO GENERAL KLEBER.

Accustomed to look for the recompence of the toils and the difficulties of life in the opinion of posterity, I abandon Egypt with the most poignant regret. The honour and interests of my country, and the extraordinary events which have recently taken place there, these, and these alone, have determined me to hazard a passage to Europe through the midst of the enemy's squadrons: in heart and in spirit I shall still remain in the midst of you. Your victories will be as dear to me as any in which I may be personally engaged; and I shall regard that day of my life as ill employed in which I shall not accomplish something for the army of which I leave you the command; and likewise for the consolidation of the magnificent establishment, the foundation of which is so recently laid.

The army intrusted to your care is entirely composed of my own children. I have never ceased, even in the midst of their trying difficulties and dangers, to receive proofs of their attachment; endeavour to preserve them still in those sentiments for me. This is due to the particular esteem and friendship I entertain for you, and to the unfeigned affection I feel for them!

BUONAPARTE.

disheartening accounts and gave ear to every idle rumour. He had formerly served under the Austrians against the Turks, and had conceived the most exaggerated ideas of their prowess and ability in war. Turkish armies and English fleets hovered for a long time in the horizon of his imagination, till Colonel Latour-Maubourg, who left France at the end of January, 1800, arrived at Cairo on the 4th of May, with the news of Buonaparte's landing in France and the events of the 18th of Brumaire, ten days previous to the term fixed for the surrender of that capital to the Grand Vizier. Kleber took heart at this, and he had only to march against the enemy. That rabble which called itself the Grand Vizier's army, was chased across the desert without making any resistance. The French had not above a hundred men killed or wounded, while the enemy lost an immense number of troops, and their tents, baggage, and artillery. An entire change now took place in Kleber's conduct; he set seriously to work to improve the state of the army and of the country; but on the 14th of June, 1800, he fell by the hand of a fanatic. Menou succeeded to the command, who was totally unfit for it. An English army of 18,000 men, under Sir Ralph Abercrombie, landed at Aboukir the year following. The event of that battle is well known; Sir Ralph Abercrombie was killed, but the French army were obliged to lay down their arms and evacuate Egypt, which they did a short time after, thus losing the whole object of the expedition. Admiral Gantheaume had sailed from Brest the 25th of January, with 5000 men to reinforce the army of Alexandria, and might have arrived in time, had he followed his orders; but he put back with every rumour of an English vessel, and shifted his course oftener than the wind, as if determined to evade his instructions and defeat the object of his voyage. The French character seems never to have been fixed, or directed steadily and effectually to a given purpose,

except under the strong pressure and immediate control of Buonaparte's iron will.\*

The scheme in which he embarked on this occasion was left imperfect, and finally failed. But an incident which happened long after, may serve to show the impression he made on all about him, and on fierce, barbaric minds. Twenty years after the date of the events here related, Antommarchi going to visit Napoleon, then a captive and dying at St. Helena, arrived off Cape Palm. They kept near to the shore, and saw a number of canoes leave the isle and make towards them. They watched the progress of these skiffs with an anxious eye. They were light, swift, narrow, and low, managed by men squatted down in them, who struck the sea with their hands and glided over its surface; a wave, a breath made them upset; but nimble as the fishes, they instantly turned their boats round again, and pursued their course. The vessel had taken in sail; they were soon up with it; they were strong, active well-made. They brought provisions, which were received with every mark of thankfulness. "Where are you going?" asked one of them. "To St. Helena," was the answer. This name struck him, he remained motionless. "To St. Helena?" he replied, in a tone of dejection, "Is it true that he is there?" "Who?" demanded the captain. "The African cast a look of disdain at him," says Antommarchi, "came to us and repeated the question. We replied that he was there. He looked at us, shook his head, and at length let the word *impossible* escape him. We gazed at one another; we could not tell who this savage could be, who spoke English, French, and who had so high an idea of Napoleon. 'You know him then?'—'Long ago.' 'You have seen him?'—'In all his glory.' 'And often?'—'In Cairo, the well-defended city, in

\* The expedition into Egypt was originally suggested to the French government under M. Calonne, and afterwards to the Directory by a man of the name of Magallon, who had been for several years French Consul-General in the East.

the Desert, in the field of battle.' 'You do not believe in his misfortunes?'—'His arm is strong, his tongue sweet as honey, nothing can resist him.' 'He has for a long time withstood the efforts of all Europe.'—'Neither Europe nor the world can overcome such a man. The Mamelukes, the Pachas were eclipsed before him; he is the God of Battles.' 'Where then did you know him?'—'I have told you, in Egypt.' 'You have served with him?'—'In the 21st; I was at Bir-am-bar, at Samanhout, at Cosseir, at Cophtos, wherever this valiant brigade was to be found. What is become of General Belliard?' 'He still lives; he has rendered his name illustrious by twenty feats of arms. You know him too?'—'He commanded the 21st; he scoured the Desert like an Arab; no obstacle stopped him.' 'Do you remember General Desaix?'—'None of those who went on the expedition to high Egypt will forget him. He was brave, ardent, generous, he plunged into ruins or battles alike; I served him a long time.' 'As a soldier?'—'No, I was not that at first; I was a slave, belonging to one of the sons of the King of Darfour. I was brought into Egypt, ill-treated, sold. I fell into the hands of an aide-de-camp of the Just.\* I was habited like a European, and charged with some domestic offices, of which I acquitted myself well; the Sultan was satisfied with my zeal, and attached me to his person. Soldier, grenadier, I would have shed my blood for him: but Napoleon cannot be at St. Helena!' 'His misfortunes are but too certain. Lassitude, disaffection, plots'—'All vanished at his sight; a single word repaid us for all our fatigues; our wishes were satisfied, we feared nothing from the moment that we saw him.' 'Have you fought under him?'—'I had been wounded at Cophtos, and was sent back into Lower Egypt; I was at Cairo when Mustapha appeared on the coast. The army had to march, I followed its movement, and was present at Aboukir. What precision, what an eye,

\* The name by which Desaix was known in Egypt.

what brilliant charges ! It is impossible that Napoleon has been conquered, that he is at St. Helena ? We did not insist ; the African was obstinate, his illusion was dear to him, and we did not wish to dispel it. We gave him some tobacco, powder, some clothes, all the trifles, in short, which were prized by his tribe. He went back well satisfied, speaking always of the 21st, of his chiefs, his general, and of the impossibility that so great a man as Napoleon should be at St. Helena.”\*

\* Last moments of Napoleon, by F. Antommarchi, vol. i. p. 51.

## CHAPTER XXII.

## THE EIGHTEENTH OF BRUMAIRE.

Napoleon's reception at Fréjus; sets out for Paris; enthusiasm of the people; sensation caused by his arrival; a glance at events during his absence; treaty of Campo-Formio broken; second coalition against the Republic; English subsidies; French plenipotentiaries assassinated by the Austrians; hostilities commenced in Italy and Germany; formidable array against France; the Duke of York lands in Holland; the new elections and their changes; the allies checked in Switzerland and in Holland; projects of Sièyes against the Republicans; his character; Napoleon entertained by the Directory, and by the legislative body; Talleyrand and Buonaparte reconciled; tottering state of the Republic; overture from Louis XVIII. to Buonaparte; the latter decides upon the measures to be taken; preparations for the 18th of Brumaire; it arrives, and the council of ancients decree the removal of the legislative body to St. Cloud, and invest Buonaparte with the command of the troops; he places himself at their head, and addresses the council; suspicion of Buonaparte's designs; his reply; the Directory dissolved; tumultuous sitting of the council of five hundred; Napoleon addresses the council of ancients; the former council propose to outlaw him; Lucien refuses to put it to the vote; the council declares its sitting permanent; the troops disperse them by order of Napoleon; end of the revolution of the 18th of Brumaire; Napoleon's proclamation to the citizens; remarks on the proclamation.

On the 9th of October 1799 (16th of Vendemiaire, year VIII.) the frigates *La Muiron* and *La Carrère* and the xebecs *La Revanche* and *La Fortune*, with which Buonaparte had sailed from Rosetta, cast anchor at break of day in the gulf of Frejus.

No sooner were the French frigates descried than it was conjectured they came from Egypt. The people ran in crowds to the shore, eager for news from the army. It was soon understood that Napoleon was on board, and such was the enthusiasm among the people, that even the wounded soldiers got out of the hospitals

in spite of the guards, and went to the shore. The spectators wept for joy. In a moment the sea was covered with boats. The officers belonging to the fortifications and the customs, the crews of the ships that were anchored in the road, in short, everybody thronged round the frigates. General Pereymont, who commanded on the coast, was the first to go on board. Thus they were allowed to enter without waiting for the officers of quarantine, for the communication with the ships had been general. Italy had just been lost : war was about to be recommenced on the Var, from whence Napoleon had driven it three years before ; and Frejus dreaded an invasion as soon as hostilities should begin. The necessity of having a leader at the head of affairs was too urgent, and the public mind was too much agitated by the sudden appearance of Napoleon at this juncture for ordinary considerations to have any weight. The quarantine officers declared that there was no occasion for subjecting these vessels to it, and grounded their report on the circumstance that they had touched at Ajaccio. This argument rather proved, that Corsica ought to have been put under the same regulations. It is true, that during fifty days which had elapsed since the vessels left Egypt, there had been no appearance of sickness, and indeed the plague had ceased three days before their departure. At six o'clock that evening, Napoleon, accompanied by Berthier, set off for Paris. The fatigue of the passage and the effect of the transition from a dry to a moist climate compelled Napoleon to stop some hours at Aix. The inhabitants of the city and of the neighbouring villages came in crowds to offer their congratulations at seeing him again. Those who lived too far from the road to present themselves there in time, rang the bells, and hoisted flags upon the steeples, which at night blazed with illuminations. It was not like the return of a citizen to his country, or of a general at the head of a victorious army, but seemed to imply something more than this. The enthusiasm of Avignon, Montelimart,



Valence, and Vienne was only surpassed by that of Lyon. That city, in which Napoleon rested for twelve hours, was in a state of general delirium. The Lyonnese had always testified a strong attachment to him, perhaps from feeling a peculiar interest (on account of their situation) in all that related to Italy. They had also just received the accounts of the battle of Aboukir, which formed a striking contrast to the defeat of the French armies of Germany and Italy. "We are numerous, we are brave," the people seemed everywhere to say, "and yet we are conquered. We want a leader to direct us—we now behold him, and our glory will once more shine forth." In the meantime, the news of Napoleon's return had reached Paris. It was announced at the theatres, and caused an universal sensation, of which even the Directory partook. Some of the *Société du Manège* trembled on the occasion, but they dissembled their real feelings so as to seem to share the common sentiment. Baudin, the deputy from the Ardennes, who had been much grieved at the disastrous turn the affairs of the Republic had taken, died of joy when he heard of Napoleon's return.

Napoleon had already quitted Lyon, before his landing was announced in Paris. With a precaution hardly necessary in these circumstances, he took a different road from the one he had mentioned to his couriers; so that his wife, his family, and particular friends went in a wrong direction to meet him, and some days elapsed in consequence before he saw them. Having thus arrived in Paris quite unexpectedly, he had alighted at his own house in the Rue Chantereine before any one knew of his being in the capital. Two hours afterwards, he presented himself to the Directory; and being recognised by the soldiers on guard, was welcomed with shouts of gladness. Happy still was this period when every spark of enthusiasm was not dead, and there was at least one man in the world who could excite the least emotion in the public breast! The intoxicating draughts of liberty and of glory that

mankind have swallowed in the last forty years seem to have exhausted the vital principle of the human mind, and have brought on premature old age and decay ! Buonaparte had every reason to congratulate himself on the reception he met with on all sides. The nature of past events sufficiently instructed him as to the situation of France ; and the information he had procured on his journey had made him acquainted with all that was going on. His resolution was taken. What he had been unwilling to attempt on his return from Italy, he was now determined to do at once. He had the greatest contempt for the government of the Directory and for the leaders in the two councils. Resolved to possess himself of authority and to restore France to her late glory by giving a powerful impulse to public affairs, he had left Egypt to execute this project ; and all that he had seen in passing through France had confirmed his sentiments and strengthened his design.

It is necessary to take a retrospective glance at what had happened in his absence. The elections of Floreal, year VI. (May 1798), which immediately followed his departure, were not favourable to the Directory, though they took place in a totally opposite spirit to those of the year V. After the 18th of Fructidor, the defeat of the counter-revolutionists had thrown all the influence into the hands of the extreme republican party, who had re-established the clubs under the title of *Constitutional Circles*. This party ruled in the electoral assemblies, which had to nominate 437 new deputies to the legislative body. As the elections drew near, the Directory inveighed loudly against those whom it termed *anarchists* ; but not being able to influence the choice of the members, it determined to annul the greater part of them in virtue of a law, by which, in the preceding year, the councils had entrusted it with the power of revising the proceedings of the electoral assemblies. For this purpose a commission of five members was appointed out of the legislative body, by means of which the party of the

Directory struck from the list all the violent Republicans, as nine months before they had excluded the Royalists. Soon after, Merlin of Douay and Treilhard, who succeeded Carnot and Barthelemy, went out of office by rotation ; Rewbell remained the chief manager in all affairs which required boldness and promptitude ; Reveillère was too much taken up with the sect of the Theophilanthropists for a statesman ; Barras led the same dissolute life as ever, and his house was the resort of gamesters, women of intrigue, and adventurers of every description. To the difficulties arising out of want of union in the government, or from the conflict of parties, were soon added those of a war with all Europe.

While the plenipotentiaries of the Republic were still negotiating the conditions of peace at Rastadt, the second Coalition took the field. The treaty of Campo-Formio had only been considered by Austria as a suspension of arms to gain time. England found no difficulty in engaging her to take part in the new confederation, to which, with the exception of Prussia and Spain, all the other European powers lent their aid. The subsidies of Great Britain and a crusade in the South prevailed with Russia : the Porte and the Barbary States acceded to it in consequence of the invasion of Egypt ; the Empire to recover the left bank of the Rhine ; and the petty princes of Italy in the hope of overturning the new Republics which had been established there. The Congress at Rastadt was gravely occupied in discussing the articles of the treaty relative to the cession of the left bank of the Rhine, the navigation of this river, and the demolition of certain fortresses on the right bank, when the Russians advanced into Germany, and the Austrian army was immediately put in motion. The French plenipotentiaries, taken unawares, received orders to depart in twenty-four hours ; they obeyed on the instant, and set forward on their journey, after having obtained safe-conducts from the enemy's generals. At a short distance from Rastadt they were waylaid by

some Austrian hussars, who having ascertained their names and titles, assassinated them on the spot; Bonnier and Roberjot were slain, Jean de Bry was left for dead. Such was the insult and outrage deliberately and openly offered to the rights of nations in the persons of the French envoys, because no terms were to be kept with those who had set up the rights of nature in opposition to the sacred rights of kings! Such was the meek patience, the long-suffering, the mild perseverance, with which the Allied Powers showed their desire of peace by massacring the ambassadors that had been appointed to conclude it with them! Such was their "unbought grace of life," their "cheap defence of nations!" Yet these are the people, they who authorised, who repeated, and who applauded outrages like this, who were the professed supporters of religion, morality, and social order, who if a hair of their heads was but touched, cried out for help as if the dissolution of the world was at hand, and who laid it down that every violation of the nicest punctilio with regard to them was a crime of the deepest dye, in proportion as they were entitled and had *carte blanche* (according to every notion of legitimacy) to practise all sorts of atrocity with impunity and with impudence. Yet these are the men who complained of the unprovoked aggressions and insatiable ambition of France, and of the impossibility of making peace with her. Yet it is to this government who thus broke off a hollow truce, and seizing the sword, threw away the scabbard, that Madame de Stael afterwards addressed the pathetic appeal—*Allemagne! tu es une nation, et tu pleures!* On the first intelligence of this breach of faith and of every principle of civilized society, the legislative body declared war against Austria, and in terms of becoming indignation at the outrage which had provoked it.

Hostilities commenced in Italy and on the Rhine. The military conscription which had been sanctioned by a law placed 200,000 recruits at the disposal of the

Republic. The powers who were the most impatient and formed the advanced guard of the Coalition had already entered the lists. The King of Naples marched against Rome, and the King of Sardinia had levied troops and menaced the Ligurian Republic. As they had not a force sufficient to stand the shock of the French armies, they were easily overthrown and defeated. General Championnet entered Naples after a sanguinary victory. The lazzaroni defended the interior of the city during the space of three days, but they were at length compelled to submit, and the *Parthenopean Republic* was proclaimed. Joubert occupied Turin, and all Italy was in the hands of the French, when the campaign opened upon a wider scale.

The Coalition had the advantage of the Republic in numerical forces, and in the forwardness of its preparations: it commenced the attack by the three grand openings of Italy, Switzerland, and Holland. A numerous Austrian army entered the Mantuan territory, and twice beat Scherer on the Adige; where it was soon after joined by the eccentric and hitherto victorious Suwarrow. Moreau took the place of Scherer, and was beaten like him. He retreated by way of Genoa, in order to maintain the barrier of the Apennines and to effect his junction with the army of Naples, commanded by Macdonald, which had been almost crushed to pieces at Trebbia. The Confederates then directed their principal forces towards Switzerland. Some Russian troops joined the Archduke Charles, who had defeated Jourdan on the Upper Rhine, and who prepared to pass the Swiss frontier. At the same time the Duke of York landed in Holland with 40,000 English and Russians. The little Republics that formed a circle round France were invaded; and, after a few more victories, the Allies might hope to penetrate to the very centre of the capital.

It was in the midst of these military disasters, and of the discontents that followed, that the new elec-

tions for the year VII. (May 1799) took place. They turned out favourably for the Republican party, but fatally for the members of the Directory, who were not strong enough to make a stand against the public calamities and their personal enemies. Siéyes replaced Rewbell, who went out by rote, and was the only one among them who had much energy or spirit to head a party. Treilhard was also deprived of his situation on account of an informality in his election to office, the year required by the constitution not having expired since he had belonged to the legislative body; his place was supplied by Gohier, Ex-minister of Justice. Merlin of Douay and Reveillère-Lepaux being thus left in a minority and violently attacked by the most powerful speakers in the councils, resigned with some reluctance, and were succeeded by General Moulins and Roger-Ducos. Siéyes, thus invested with power which he had hitherto declined, began to cast about how he should effect the ruin of the old Republican Constitution of the year III. and set up one of those in its stead, the plan of which he always carried about with him in his pocket. He had either feared or had a dislike to Rewbell, and, as long as he was in office, refused to act with him. In the Directory he at present reckoned on the support of Ducos; in the legislature, on the majority of the Council of Ancients; among the people on those who, wishing to keep what they have, only require stability and order: he was at a loss for a military leader, and for this purpose had fixed on Joubert, whom he had placed at the head of the army of the Alps, that by means of victory and the liberation of Italy he might gain a great political ascendant. The new Directors, Gohier and Moulins, still wished to maintain the constitution of the year III.; they had the Council of Five Hundred on their side, and were strengthened by the club of the *Manège*, the remnant of that of *Salms*, of the *Pantheon*, and of the *Jacobins*. Barras remained neuter amidst these factions, or rather had a new game of his own

to play, as he had lately connected himself with the royalist party. This amidst so many agitations had not been idle, and taking advantage of the successes of the Coalition, of the embarrassments occasioned by the forced loan, and of the unpopularity of the law of hostages, which required the families of emigrants to give personal security to government, had begun to raise disturbances in the south and west, and to re-appear in armed bands. Of all the factions that disturbed France for so long a time, this is the only one that remained true to itself ; that waited patiently, watched its opportunity, and seized upon it whenever it occurred. Power never slumbers, and fear and self-interest wait upon it as its shadow !

Fortunately for the Republic, the war took a turn about this time on the two principal frontiers of the Upper and Lower Rhine. The Allies, having gained possession of Italy, wanted to penetrate into France by Switzerland and Holland ; but Massena and Brune put a stop to their hitherto triumphant march. Massena advanced against Korsakof and Suwarrow. During twelve days of well-contrived manœuvres and successive victories, passing to and fro from Constance to Zurich, he repelled the efforts of the Russians, forced them to retreat, and broke up the Coalition. Brune likewise defeated the Duke of York in Holland, obliged him to re-embark on board his vessels, and give up the attempt at invasion. The army of Italy alone had been less successful ; and its general, Joubert, had been killed at the battle of Novi, as he was charging the Austro-Russian army at the head of his troops. But this frontier was of less consequence on account of its remoteness, and was also ably defended by Championnet. The change in the face of the war made, however, no change in the state of parties. Things went on as before. Siéyes pursued his projects against the Republicans. Lucien Buonaparte gave a flaming description in the Council of Five Hundred of the reign of terror, which he said was about to be renewed. Bernadotte was deprived of his command,

and Fouché, who had lately been appointed to the head of the police, shut up the *Société du Manège*. The death of Joubert had once more embarrassed Siéyes in the choice of a military leader. Hoche had been dead more than a year; Moreau was suspected on account of his conduct with regard to Pichegru. Massena was no politician; Bernadotte and Jourdan were of the opposite party. Things were in this state when Buonaparte returned, nineteen days after the victory of Bergen, obtained by Brune over the Duke of York, and fourteen after that of Zurich, obtained by Massena over Suwarrow. He was just the man that Siéyes wanted; but as Buonaparte did not stand in the same need of him, the fine web of policy he had woven was taken out of his hands the moment it was realised, and the great political machine he had been at so much pains and had taken so much time to construct, turned and crushed the inventor as soon as it was put in motion.

Of the members that composed the Directory when Buonaparte quitted France a year and a half before, Barras alone remained. The other members were Ducos, Gohier, Moulins, men of moderate talents, but of good intentions, and Siéyes. The latter had been long known to Napoleon. He was a native of Frejus in Provence, and his reputation had commenced with the Revolution. He had been called to the Constituent Assembly by the electors of the third estate at Paris, after having been repulsed by the assembly of the clergy at Chartres. He was the author of the pamphlet entitled, "*Qu'est-ce-que le Tiers Etat?*" which made so much noise. He was not a man of business; all his studies having been devoted to metaphysics, he had the common fault of metaphysicians, that of too often despising positive notions; but he was, notwithstanding, capable of giving good and useful advice on matters of importance, or at any urgent crisis. To him France is indebted for its division into Departments, which destroyed a number of local prejudices; and though



he was never distinguished as an orator, he greatly contributed to the success of the Revolution by his advice in the committees. He was nominated to the Directory at its first establishment; but he declined the distinction at that time from his dislike to Rewbell; and Reveillère-Lepaux was appointed in his stead. He was afterwards sent ambassador to Berlin, where he imbibed a great mistrust of the politics of Prussia. He had taken a seat in the Directory not long before the 18th of Brumaire; but he had already made great exertions to check the progress of the *Société du Manège*, which he conceived to be ready to seize the helm of the state. At the period of the 13th of Vendemiaire, a trifling circumstance had given Napoleon a favourable opinion of him. At the most alarming moment of that day, when the Committee of the Forty seemed quite at a loss, Siéyes came to Napoleon and drew him into the recess of a window, while the committee was deliberating upon the answer to be given to the summons of the Sections. "You hear them, general," said he; "they talk while they should be acting. Bodies of men are wholly unfit to direct armies, for they know not the value of time or occasion. You have nothing to do here; go, general, consult your genius and the situation of the country; the hopes of the Republic rest on you alone."

Napoleon accepted an invitation to a private dinner with each of the Directors; and a grand entertainment was given to him by the Directory. The legislative body desired to follow the example; but an objection arose on account of Moreau, whom they did not wish to invite or to show him any marks of respect, his behaviour having excited a very general disapprobation. To avoid this difficulty, recourse was had to a subscription, and the entertainment was given in the church of St. Sulpice, where covers were laid for seven hundred persons. Napoleon remained at table but a short time. He also dined with the minister of justice (Cambacères), where he requested that the principal lawyers of the Republic might be

invited. He appeared very cheerful at this dinner, conversed at large on the civil and criminal codes, to the great astonishment of Tronchet, Treilhard, Merlin, and Target, and expressed a wish that the persons and property of the Republic should be subjected to a simple code, adapted to the enlightened state of the age. This wish he afterwards carried into effect in the *Code Napoléon*. He entered but little into public entertainments of any kind, and pursued nearly the same line of conduct that he had followed on his first return from Italy. He went frequently to the institute, but seldom to the theatres, and then always into the private boxes. Meanwhile, the arrival of Napoleon in France made a strong impression on the rest of Europe. The English were particularly enraged at Sir Sidney Smith and Nelson for letting him escape. A number of caricatures on the subject were exhibited in the streets of London, in one of which Nelson was represented amusing himself with dressing Lady Hamilton, while the frigate *La Muiron* was passing between his legs.

Talleyrand did not expect to be well received by Buonaparte, as he had not seconded the expedition to Egypt by opening negotiations with the Porte, or going himself in person, as had been stipulated. But he had been dismissed from the situation he held through the influence of the clubs. His address was also insinuating, his talents important; a reconciliation accordingly took place between the general and the minister, for each wanted the other. Fouché, in whom Buonaparte had no faith, was not, though minister of police, admitted into the secret of the 18th of Brumaire. Réal, a zealous revolutionist, but a man full of energy and character, possessed most of his confidence. All classes were impatient to see what Napoleon would do, and all parties courted him. The *Société du Manège* even offered to acknowledge him as chief, and to entrust the fortunes of the Republic to him, if he would second their principles in other respects. Siéyes, who had the

vote of Roger Ducos in the Directory, who swayed the majority of the Ancients, and influenced a minority in the Council of Five Hundred, proposed to place him at the head of the government, changing the constitution of the year III., which he deemed defective, and substituting one of his own, which he had by him in manuscript. A numerous party in the Council of Five Hundred, with Lucien Buonaparte at their head, were also strongly in his favour. Barras, Moulins, and Gohier hinted the eligibility of his resuming his old command of the army of Italy. Moulins and Gohier were sincere in the plan they recommended, and trusted that all would go well from the moment that Napoleon should once more lead the armies to victory. Barras knew better; he was aware that everything went wrong, that the Republic was sinking; and it is broadly asserted that a plan to restore the Bourbons through his means had miscarried by the merest accident only a few weeks before. Even Louis XVIII. turned his eyes on Buonaparte as a second General Monk, and wrote him a confidential letter, exhorting him to put his intentions in his favour into effect, not long after the overthrow of the Directory.

In these circumstances Napoleon had the choice of several measures: 1st. To strengthen the existing constitution and support the Directory, by becoming himself one of them. But the Directory and the existing constitution had fallen into contempt, partly from external reverses, partly from wounds inflicted on itself; and besides, he conceived that a magistracy in several hands wanted the energy necessary in the circumstances of the times, to say nothing of his own personal views. 2nd. He might change the actual government, and seize on power by the aid of the *Société du Manège* and the violent Republican party. In that way his triumph would be secure and easy. But he reasoned that these men attached themselves to no leader, and would brook no control; that they would by incessant jealousy and cabal throw all into

chaos and confusion again, and that either the same scenes of violence and extravagance would be acted over again, of which there had already been a satiety, or that he should be obliged to get rid of, and put down by the strong hand of power, the very persons who had raised him to it, and who had expected to share it with him. There was a treachery and want of decorum in this, to which he felt a repugnance ; or rather he had no inclination to enter into any compromise or compact with this party, but to wash his hands of them from the first as a preliminary and indispensable step. 3rd. He might secure the support of Barras and his friends, but they were men of profligate character, and openly accused of embezzling the public treasure. Without strict integrity, it would have been impossible to restore the finances or give energy to the measures of government. 4th. Siéyes had a considerable party at his disposal, men of character and friends of liberty on principle, but possessed of little energy, intimidated by the *Manège*, and averse to popular violence. Such persons might be made useful after the victory, and Siéyes could be considered in no sense as a dangerous rival. But to side with this party was to make enemies of Barras and the Jacobins, who abhorred Siéyes.

On the 8th of Brumaire (October 30th) Napoleon dined with Barras and a few other persons. "The Republic is falling," said the Director ; "things can go no farther ; a change must take place, and Hedouville must be named President of the Republic. As to you, General, you intend to join the army ; and for my part, ill as I am, unpopular, and worn out, I am fit only to return to private life." Napoleon looked stedfastly at him, without replying a word. General Hedouville was a man of the most ordinary character. This conversation decided Napoleon ; and immediately after, he called on Siéyes to give him to understand that he had made up his mind to act with him, and it was settled that the blow should be struck between the 15th and 20th of Brumaire. On return-

ing to his own house, he found Talleyrand, Fouché, Roederer, and Réal there. He related to them, without any comment or without any expression of countenance which could betray his own opinion, what Barras had just said to him. Réal and Fouché, who both had a regard for the Director, went to him to tax him with his ill-timed dissimulation. The following morning at eight o'clock Barras came to Napoleon, who had not risen; insisted on seeing him, said how imperfectly he had explained himself the preceding evening, declared that he alone could save the Republic, and entreated him, if he had any project in agitation, to rely entirely on his cordial concurrence. But Napoleon, who had already taken his measures, replied that he had nothing in view, that he was indisposed from fatigue and the change of climate, and put an end to the interview. Gohier and Moulin came daily to Napoleon to consult him on military and civil business: with respect to the first, he offered his opinions frankly, but he declined interfering with the latter.

The officers of the garrison of Paris, headed by Moreau, the adjutants of the National Guard, most of whom had been appointed by him when he was general of the army of the interior, wished to be presented to Napoleon: the 8th and 9th regiments of dragoons, who were old regiments of the army of Italy, the 21st light horse, who had taken a distinguished part on the 13th of Vendémiaire against the Sections, wished him to appoint a day to review them: but the better to conceal his designs, he either declined all these overtures or gave evasive answers to them. The citizens of Paris also complained of the general's keeping so close; they went to the theatres and reviews in the hope of seeing him, but he was not there. Nobody could account for this shyness. "It is now," they said, "a fortnight since his arrival" (an age to the levity and short-sightedness of these people) "and as yet he has done nothing. Does he mean to behave as he did on his return from Italy,

and leave the Republic to be still torn in pieces by contending factions?" But the decisive hour approached.

On the 15th Siéyes and Buonaparte had an interview, at which they resolved on the measures for the 18th. It was agreed that the Council of Ancients, availing itself of the 102nd article of the constitution, should decree the removal of the legislative body to St. Cloud, and should appoint Napoleon Commander-in-Chief of the guard belonging to it, of the troops of the military division of Paris, and of the National Guard. This decree was to be passed on the 18th, at seven o'clock in the morning; at eight, Napoleon was to go to the Tuileries, where the troops were to be assembled, and there to assume the command of the capital. On the 17th he sent word to the officers of the garrison that he would receive them the next day, at six in the morning. As that hour might appear unseasonable, he feigned being about to set off on a journey: he gave the same invitation to the forty adjutants of the National Guard; and he informed the three cavalry regiments that he would review them in the Champs Élysées, on the same day, (the 18th) at seven in the morning. He also intimated to the generals who had returned from Egypt with him, and to all those on whose sentiments he could rely, that he should be glad to see them at that hour. Each thought that the invitation was addressed to himself alone, and supposed that Napoleon had some particular orders to give him; as it was known that Dubois de Crancé, the minister-at-war, had laid the reports of the state of the army before him, and had adopted his advice on all that was to be done, as well on the frontiers of the Rhine as in Italy.

Moreau, who had been at the dinner given by the legislative body, where Napoleon had for the first time become acquainted with him, having learnt from public report that a change was in agitation, assured the latter that he placed himself at his disposal, that he had no wish to be admitted into any secrets, and

that he required but an hour's notice. Macdonald, who happened to be at Paris, had made the same tender of his services. At two o'clock in the morning, Napoleon let them know that he wished to see them at his house at seven o'clock, and on horseback. He did not apply to Augereau or Bernadotte, whom he knew to be hostile to his designs ; but Joseph Buonaparte brought the latter, who however slipped away from the cavalcade as it was on its way to the Council of Ancients, and went to join the discontented members of the *Manège*. General Lefebvre, who commanded the military division, was known to be wholly devoted to the Directory ; Napoleon dispatched an aide-de-camp to him at midnight, desiring he would come to him at six o'clock.

Everything took place as it had been planned. About seven in the morning the Council of Ancients assembled under the presidency of Lemercier. Cornudet, Lebrun, and Fargues depicted in lively colours the distresses of the country and the dangers to which it was exposed from internal and external enemies. Regnier, deputy from La Meurthe, then proposed the removal of the sittings of the legislative body to St. Cloud, and that Buonaparte should be invested with the command of the troops ; "under the shelter of whose protecting arm," added the orator, "the councils may proceed to discuss the changes which the public interest renders necessary." As soon as it was known that this step had been taken in concert with Buonaparte, the decree passed, but not without strong opposition. The decree was passed at eight o'clock ; and at half-past eight the state-messenger who was the bearer of it arrived at Napoleon's house.\* The avenues were filled with the officers of the garrison, the adjutants of the National Guard, a number of generals, and the three regiments of cavalry. Napo-

\* This house was well chosen. It is up a long narrow avenue (in the Rue Chantierine) with walls on both sides, where Buonaparte, if need had been, could have held out for a long time with a few hundred men against all Paris.

leon had the folding-doors thrown open ; and his house being too small to contain such a concourse of persons, he came forward on the steps in front of it, received the congratulations of the officers, harangued them, and repeated that he relied upon them for the salvation of France. At the same time he gave them to understand that the Council of Ancients, under the authority of the constitution, had just conferred on him the command of all the troops ; that important measures were in agitation, designed to rescue the country from its embarrassed situation ; that he trusted to their support and good-will, and that he was at that moment ready to mount horse to proceed to the Tuileries. This address was received with the greatest enthusiasm ; the officers drew their swords, and vowed their service and fidelity. Napoleon then turned towards Lefebvre, demanding whether he chose to remain with him or return to the Directory ; but the latter, overcome by this appeal, did not hesitate a moment. Napoleon then mounted on horseback, and placed himself at the head of the generals and officers and of fifteen hundred horse, who had halted for him on the Boulevard at the corner of the Rue Mont Blanc. He directed the adjutants of the National Guard to return to their quarters, and beat the drums ; to make known the decree which they had just heard, and to announce that no orders were to be obeyed but such as should emanate from him.

Napoleon presented himself at the bar of the Council of Ancients, attended by this imposing escort. He addressed the Assembly. "You are the wisdom of the nation," he said ; "at this crisis it belongs to you to point out the measures which may save the country. I come, surrounded by all the generals, to promise you their support. I appoint General Lefebvre my lieutenant. I will faithfully fulfil the task with which you have entrusted me. Let us not look into the past for examples of what is now going on. Nothing in history resembles the end of the eighteenth century : nothing in the eighteenth cen-



tury resembles the present moment." The troops were mustered at the Tuileries; Napoleon reviewed them amidst the unanimous acclamations of both citizens and soldiers. He gave the command of the troops which were to guard the legislative body to General Lannes; and to Murat the command of those sent forward to St. Cloud. He deputed Moreau to guard the Luxembourg with 500 soldiers of the 86th regiment, whom he placed under his orders; but at the moment of setting off, the men refused to march from their want of confidence in Moreau, and Buonaparte was obliged to harangue them before they would obey. The news that Napoleon was at the Tuileries, and that he was invested with the supreme command, flew like lightning through the capital. The people flocked in crowds to see him or to offer him their services. The decree of the Council of Ancients and an address from Buonaparte to the citizens and to the soldiers were everywhere posted up on the walls of Paris. He called on the former to rally round the legislative body as the only means of ensuring union and confidence, and he assured the latter that "liberty, victory, and peace would soon reinstate the Republic, which had been ill-governed for two years, in the rank which she held in Europe, and from which imbecility and treachery were alone capable of degrading her." The greatest agitation and uncertainty prevailed in Paris. The friends of liberty expressed their apprehension of the ultimate designs of Buonaparte, in whom they saw a future Cæsar or Cromwell; but were answered by his partisans in the words of the general himself, who designated the parts they had played as "*bad parts, parts worn out, unworthy of a man of sense, even if they were not so of a man of honour. It would be nothing less than a sacrilegious ambition that would attempt any such enterprise as that of overturning a representative government in the age of light and liberty. He must be a madman who should, in mere wantonness of heart, lose the wager of the Republic against*

*royalty, after having maintained it with some glory and at some risk."* These words might be supposed to convict the person to whom they are attributed of the rankest hypocrisy, if the heart were not deceitful above all things, or if it were not true that men often dare not avow their intentions to themselves till they are ripe for execution, or scarcely know what they are till they have been crowned with success. The reproaches he addressed to Bottot, Barras's secretary, were more in character, more consonant with his past services and future designs: "What have you done with that France which I left so splendid? I left you at peace, and I find you at war: I left you victory, and I find defeats: I left you the spoils of Italy, and I find everywhere oppression and misery. What have you done with a hundred thousand Frenchmen whom I knew, all of them my companions in glory? They are dead. This state of things cannot last; in three years it would lead us to destruction. According to some, we shall all be shortly enemies to the Republic—we who have preserved it by our efforts and our courage. We have no occasion for better patriots than the brave men who have shed their blood in its defence?" Napoleon now sent an aide-de-camp to the guards of the Directory, for the purpose of communicating the decree to them, and enjoining them to receive no orders but from him. The guards sounded to horse; the commanding officer consulted the soldiers, who answered with shouts of joy. At this very moment an order from the Directory arrived, contrary to that of Napoleon; but the soldiers, obeying no orders but his, marched to join him. Siéyes and Roger Ducos had been ever since the morning at the Tuileries. It is said that Barras, on seeing Siéyes mount his horse, was much amused at the awkwardness of the unpractised equestrian, little suspecting the event of this day's proceedings. Being shortly after apprised of the decree, Barras consulted with Gohier and Moulins, the latter of whom proposed to send a battalion to surround Buonaparte's

house; but finding no means of executing their threats, as their own guards had deserted them, both Gohier and Moulins went to the Tuileries and gave in their resignation, as Siéyes and Roger Ducos had already done. Talleyrand hastened to inform Barras of what had just taken place, and having done the same, he was removed under a guard of honour to his estate at Gros-Bois. The Directory was thus dissolved, and Napoleon remained master of the field.

Cambacères, Fouché, and the other ministers repaired to the Tuileries, prepared to act under the new authority. Fouché had given directions for closing the barriers and preventing the departure of couriers and stage-coaches. Buonaparte disapproved of this. "Wherefore," he asked, "all these precautions? We go with the opinion of the nation, and by its strength alone. Let no citizen be interrupted, and let every publicity be given to what is done!" The majority of the Five Hundred, the minority of the Ancients, and the leaders of the Manège spent the night of the 18th in consultation. At a meeting at the Tuileries, Siéyes proposed that the forty principal leaders of the opposition should be arrested. This recommendation savoured too much of caution or of fear to be relished by Napoleon, though he afterwards had reason to think Siéyes was right. It was at this meeting that the appointment of three Provisional Consuls was agreed upon, as well as the adjournment of the councils for three months. Their several parts were also assigned to the leaders in the two councils for the next day.

On the 19th the deputies met at St. Cloud. Siéyes and Ducos accompanied Buonaparte to this new field of battle, to assist him with their encouragement or advice; and Siéyes remained during the whole day in his carriage at the gate of St. Cloud, prepared to act as circumstances should require. The Orangery was allotted to the Council of Five Hundred, and the Gallery of Mars to that of the Ancients; the apartments since known by the name of the Saloon of the Princes and the

Empress's Cabinet were prepared for Napoleon and his staff. Though the workmen had been busily employed the whole of the preceding day, it was two o'clock before the place assigned to the Council of Five Hundred could be got ready. This delay produced some murmuring and inconveniences. The deputies who had been on the spot since noon, formed groups in the garden, grew warm and animated, and encouraged one another in their opposition to the new measures. The General-in-Chief traversed the courts and the apartments, and giving way to the ill-disguised impatience of his character, was heard to declare, "I will have no more factions, all that must cease absolutely!" more in the authoritative tone of the master than of the servant of the state.

As soon as the sittings opened, which they did to the sound of music playing the Marseillois, Emile Gaudin, one of the Five Hundred, ascended the tribune, painted in alarming colours the dangers of the country, and proposed thanks to the Council of Ancients for the measures of public safety which it had taken, at the same time inviting them by message to explain themselves more fully on the means of saving the Republic. This motion became the signal for the most violent tumult; from all sides of the hall loud cries of disapprobation were directed against Gaudin: the speaker in the confusion was hurled violently to the bottom of the tribune. The ferment was excessive. The republican party surrounded the tribune and the chair where Lucien Buonaparte presided. Cabanis, Boulay de la Meurthe, Chazal, Gaudin, Chenier, and others who were chiefly concerned in the success of the day, grew pale and uneasy in their seats. After a long and violent uproar, during which no one could make himself heard, silence was restored for a moment, and Delbrel proposed to renew the oath to the constitution of the year III. The chamber from this proceeded to the *Appel Nominal*, each member by turns answering to his name, and giving his vote at the same time. During the

*Appel Nominal*, reports of what was passing reached the capital. The leaders of the *Société du Manège*, the *tricoteuses* were all in motion. Jourdan and Augereau, who had hitherto kept out of the way, believing Napoleon lost, hastened to St. Cloud. Augereau, drawing him aside, said, "Well, here you are in a fine situation!" "Remember Arcola," replied Napoleon; "matters then appeared much worse. Take my advice, and remain quiet for half an hour, and you will see things take a different turn."

The Assembly appeared to declare itself with so much unanimity, that no deputy durst refuse to swear fidelity to the constitution, which would have been capital in the circumstances: even Lucien was compelled to take the oath. Shouts and cries of approbation were heard throughout the chamber. Many members on taking the oath added observations which might have a dangerous influence on the troops. No time was to be lost. Napoleon crossed the Saloon of Mars, entered the Council of Ancients, and placed himself at the bar opposite to the president. Everything would be to be dreaded, should the latter Assembly, which was favourably inclined to him, catch by infection the tone of the Council of Five Hundred. "Representatives of the people," he said, "you are here in no ordinary circumstances; you stand on a volcano. Yesterday I was living in privacy, when you sent for me to notify to me the decree of the removal of the councils, and to charge me to see it executed. I instantly collected around me my companions in arms; we have flown to your succour. But to-day I am loaded with calumnies: they talk of Cæsar, of Cromwell, of a military despotism. If I had wished to oppress the liberties of my country, I should not have listened to the orders which you have given me; nor should I have needed to receive this authority at your hands. More than once (and under the most favourable circumstances) have I been called upon to assume the sovereign power. After our triumphs in Italy, I was invited to it by the voice of

my comrades, of those brave men who have been so ill-used since. But I declined doing so, because I did not think my interference required by the situation of the country. I swear to you, representatives of the people, the country has no more zealous defender than myself; but it is to you that it must look for safety. Danger presses, and disasters come thick upon us. The minister of police has just informed me that several fortified places have fallen into the hands of the Chouans. There is no longer a government; four of the Directors have tendered their resignation; the fifth (Barras) is under *surveillance*. The Council of Five Hundred is divided, and influenced by agitators and turbulent men, who would bring back the time of revolutionary tribunals, and who are now sending out emissaries to instigate Paris to revolt. Fear not, representatives, these criminal projects; surrounded by my brethren in arms, I shall find means to protect you from their violence. I desire nothing for myself, but that you would save the Republic; and as you cannot make the constitution, abused as it has been, respected, that you would at least preserve the foundation on which it rests, liberty and equality. You have only to speak the word, and your orders shall be obeyed. And you, brave grenadiers, whose caps I observe at the doors of this hall, whom I have so often led to victory against the satellites of kings, I who am now accused of being hostile to liberty, say, did I ever break my word to you, when in the camp, in the midst of privations, I promised you victory and plenty, and when at your head I led you from conquest to conquest? Now, say, was it for my own aggrandisement, or for the interest of the Republic? And let those who talk of outlawing me, beware how they draw that condemnation on themselves. Should some orator in foreign pay propose such a measure, I should appeal to you, my friends, and to my own good fortune."

The General-in-Chief in thus appealing to his men, spoke with evident emotion; and the grenadiers,

waving their caps and brandishing their arms in the air, with one accord testified their assent. Upon this Linglet, one of the most resolute members, rose and said : " General, we applaud what you say ; swear then with us obedience to the constitution of the year III. which can alone save the Republic." This proposition took the council by surprise, and Buonaparte was for a moment disconcerted by it ; but he recovered himself presently, and said : " The constitution of the year III. ? you have it no longer. You violated it on the 18th of Fructidor ; you violated it on the 20th of Floreal ; you violated it on the 30th of Prairial. The constitution is a mockery invoked by all parties, and infringed by them all in turn. It cannot be effectually appealed to, since it has the respect of no person. The constitution once violated, it is necessary to have recourse to a new compact, to other guarantees." The council applauded the reproaches which Buonaparte thus threw out against it, and rose in sign of approbation. Cornudet and Regnier spoke warmly to the same effect. A member of the opposition party denounced the general as the only conspirator against public liberty. Napoleon interrupted the orator, by declaring that he was in the secret of every party, and that all despised the constitution of the year III. alike, the only difference being that some desired to have a moderate Republic, in which all the national interests and all property should be respected, while others wanted a revolutionary government, with a renewal of all the disorders they had gone through. At this moment Napoleon was informed that the *Nominal Appeal* was terminated in the Council of Five Hundred, and that they were endeavouring to force the President Lucien to put the outlawry of his brother to the vote. Napoleon immediately hastened to the Five Hundred, entered the chamber with his hat off, and ordered the officers and soldiers who accompanied him to wait at the door : he was desirous to present himself at the bar, to rally his party, which was numerous, but which had lost all

unity and resolution. When Napoleon had advanced alone across one-third of the Orangery, two or three hundred members suddenly rose, crying, "Death to the tyrant! Down with the dictator!" Several members advanced to meet him, and Bigonnet, seizing him by the arm, said, "What are you thinking of, rash man? Withdraw; you profane the sanctuary of the laws." Buonaparte stopped, and turned round; and the grenadiers, seeing what was passing, rushed forward and forced him out of the chamber. In the confusion one of them, named Thomé, was slightly wounded by the thrust of a dagger.

The absence of the general did not restore quiet. All the members spoke at once, every one proposed some measure of public safety and defence. They loaded Lucien Buonaparte with reproaches: the latter justified his brother, but with hesitation. He at length succeeded in mounting the tribune, and appealed to the council to judge his brother with less rigour. He assured them that he entertained no designs contrary to liberty—he recalled his services. But several voices cried out, "He has forfeited all his claims:" the tumult became more violent than ever, and they demanded the outlawry of General Buonaparte. "What!" exclaimed Lucien, "do you wish me to pronounce the sentence of outlawry against my brother, the saviour of his country! of him whose very name makes kings tremble?"—"Yes, yes, it is the reward of tyrants." It was then proposed and put to the vote in the midst of all this disorder, that the council should be declared permanent, and should repair instantly to its place of meeting in Paris; that the troops assembled at St. Cloud should be considered as forming part of the guard of the legislative body, and the command given to General Bernadotte. Lucien, confounded by so many propositions, and by the vote of outlawry which he thought was adopted among the rest, quitted the chair, mounted the tribune, and called out in a state of the greatest agitation, "Since I can no longer obtain a hearing in this as-



sembly, I lay aside with the deep feeling of insulted dignity the symbols of the popular magistracy." Saying this, he stripped himself of his cloak and his president's scarf.

Meanwhile, Buonaparte had some difficulty, on coming out of the Council of Five Hundred, in recovering from his embarrassment. Little accustomed to scenes of popular violence, he had been a good deal staggered. This is easily understood, for no man has more than one kind of courage, namely, in those things in which he is accustomed to feel his power and see his way clearly. Even our habitual confidence and success in other things operate as a drawback rather than otherwise, for we are the more struck with the contrast and the want of our usual resources, and exaggerate every trifling impediment into a serious objection. His officers formed a circle round him; and Siéyes, more seasoned to revolutionary storms, sent to advise the instant employment of force. General Lefebvre directly received orders to bring off Lucien from the Council. A detachment of soldiers entered the hall, advanced towards the chair, of which Lucien had again taken possession, enclosed him in their ranks, and saying, "It is your brother's orders" (for he was at first surprised at their appearance) returned with him in triumph in the midst of the troops. As soon as Lucien was at liberty, he got on horseback by the side of his brother, and though stripped of his legal title, still harangued the troops as president. He declared that the majority of the Five Hundred were intimidated and prevented from coming to any regular deliberation by a handful of assassins. Raising his powerful voice, he exclaimed, "General, and you soldiers, and all you who are citizens, you will recognise as legislators of France only those who are willing to follow me. As to those who shall remain in the Orangery, let them be expelled by force. Those banditti, armed with poniards, are no longer the representatives of the people!"

After this furious philippic, Buonaparte took up the discourse: "Soldiers," he said, "I have led you to victory; may I rely upon you?"—"Yes, yes; long live our General!"—"Soldiers, there was reason to believe that the Council of Five Hundred would save the country; on the contrary, it is given up to dissensions within itself; turbulent and designing men are trying to direct all its rage against me. Soldiers, can I rely on you?"—"Yes, yes!"—"Well, then, I am about to bring them to reason:" and so saying, he gave orders to some superior officers about him to clear the hall of the Five Hundred.

The council, after the departure of Lucien, was given up to the most cruel anxiety and most lamentable indecision. Some members proposed to return to Paris in a body, and throw themselves on the protection of the people; others were for waiting the issue and setting at defiance the violence with which they were threatened. While these discussions were going on, a troop of grenadiers entered the hall, proceeded slowly up it, and the officers commanding it notified to the council the order to disperse itself. The deputy Prudhon reminded the officer and the soldiers of the respect due to the representatives of the people; General Jourdan also pointed out the enormity of their present proceeding. The troops hesitated a little, but a reinforcement entered in close column with General Leclerc at its head, who said aloud, "In the name of General Buonaparte, the legislative corps is dissolved; let all good citizens retire. Grenadiers, forward!" Cries of indignation rose from all parts of the hall, but they were stifled by the sound of the drums. The grenadiers advanced, occupying the whole width of the Orangery, slowly and presenting bayonets. They thus drove the legislative body before them, who withdrew amidst cries of *Long live the Republic!* At half-past five o'clock, 19th of Brumaire (10th of November), there was no longer any representation of the people.

About one hundred deputies of the Council of Five Hundred rallied and joined the Council of Ancients, who had witnessed the foregoing scene of military violence with some uneasiness, but were soon satisfied with the explanations that were given. At eleven at night the two councils reassembled; and two committees were appointed to report upon the state of the Republic. On the motion of Berenger, thanks to Napoleon and the troops were carried. Boulay de la Meurthe in the Five Hundred, and Villetard in the Ancients, stated the situation of the country and the measures necessary to be taken. The law of the 19th of Brumaire was passed, which adjourned the councils to the 1st of Ventose following; and authorised two committees of twenty-five members each to represent the councils *ad interim*. These committees were also instructed to prepare a civil code. A Provisional Consular Commission, consisting of Siéyes, Roger Ducos, and Napoleon, was charged with the executive power. The provisional consuls repaired on the 20th at two in the morning to the Chamber of the Orangery, where the councils were then sitting. Lucien, as president, addressed them in these words; "Citizen Consuls, *the greatest people on earth* entrusts its fate to you. Three months hence, your measures must pass the ordeal of public opinion. The welfare of thirty millions of men, internal quiet, the wants of the armies, peace—such are to be the objects of your cares. Doubtless, courage and devotion to your duties are requisite in taking upon you functions so important; but the confidence of our people and warriors is with you, and the legislative body is convinced that your hearts are wholly with the country. Citizen Consuls, we have previously to adjourning taken the oath, which you will repeat in the midst of us; the sacred oath of fidelity to the sovereignty of the people, to the French Republic one and indivisible, to liberty, to equality, and to the representative system." The Assembly separated, and the Consuls returned to

Paris to the palace of the Luxembourg. Thus was the Revolution of the 18th of Brumaire effected without blood, but not without violence or falsehood.

At nine o'clock in the evening of the 19th, the news had spread from St. Cloud throughout Paris; and the following proclamation, signed by Buonaparte, was read by torchlight.

“Citizens! On my return to Paris I found discord pervading every department of government and only this single truth unanimously agreed on—that the constitution was half destroyed, and no longer capable of maintaining our liberties. Every party by turns applied to me, entrusted me with its designs, disclosed its secrets, and solicited my support. I refused to become the head of any faction. The Council of Ancients called on me. I answered the appeal. A plan for a general reform had been devised by men in whom the nation is accustomed to behold the defenders of liberty, of justice, and of property: this plan demanded calm, free, and impartial examination, unfettered by influence or fear. The Council of Ancients therefore determined upon the removal of the legislative body to St. Cloud. It entrusted me with the disposal of the force *necessary for the maintenance of its independence*. I deemed it due from me to my fellow-citizens, to the soldiers who are laying down their lives in our ranks, to the glory purchased by their blood, to accept the command. The councils met at St. Cloud, the troops of the Republic guaranteed safety without; but assassins spread terror within. The plans which were to have been brought forward were withheld; the majority of the Assembly was disorganized; the most intrepid speakers were disconcerted; and the inutility of any sober proposition became but too evident. Indignant and grieved, I hastened to the Council of Ancients; I entreated it to allow me to carry its designs for the public good into execution. I urged the misfortunes of the country which had suggested them.

The council seconded my views by new testimonies of unabated confidence. I then offered myself to the Chamber of Five Hundred—alone, unarmed, my head uncovered, as I had been received by the Ancients with so much approbation. Instantly the daggers which had menaced the deputies were raised against their defender. Twenty assassins rushed upon me, aiming at my breast. The grenadiers of the legislative body, whom I had left at the door of the chamber hastily interposed between these murderers and myself. One of these brave fellows (Thomé) received a thrust with a dagger, which pierced through his clothes. They carried me off, and at the instant they were doing so, cries were heard, demanding the outlawry of him who was at that very time the defender of the law. They crowded round the president, threatening him with arms in their hands, and requiring him to pronounce the outlawry. Apprised of this, I gave directions for rescuing him from their fury, and ten grenadiers of the legislative body charged into the chamber and cleared it. The factious parties, intimidated, dispersed and fled. The majority, relieved from their violence, returned freely and peaceably into the chamber, listened to the proposals made to them; and on due deliberation, framed the wholesome resolutions, which are about to become the new and provisional law of the Republic. Frenchmen! you will doubtless recognise in my conduct the zeal of a soldier of liberty, of a citizen devoted to the Republic. The principles on which security, liberty, and property depend, are restored to their due preponderance by the dispersion of those factious men who tyrannised over the councils, and who, though they have been prevented from becoming the most hateful of men, are nevertheless the most wretched."

This proclamation is one of those things in which Buonaparte appears in the most unfavourable light, and which have afforded the greatest handle to his enemies. It is a tissue of glaring misrepresentations,

or paltry and ill-disguised subterfuges. It betrays either a panic-fear unworthy of a brave man, or a gratuitous and barefaced hypocrisy, unworthy of an honest one. If his conduct was called for by strong necessity, let it be justified on that ground; if it had only ambition to plead, let it be justified by its success; and not in either case by a multiplication of air-drawn daggers and womanish apprehensions, which are beneath the dignity of public affairs, and seem more like a parody on Falstaff's "ten men in buckram," than a part of serious history. There is nothing that posterity forgive so unwillingly as a lie. *That* is peculiarly their affair. The actual evil may have passed away, but the insult to the understanding remains, and the attempt to take from us the means of coming to a right judgment causes a fresh resentment every time it is thought of. Buonaparte appears to have been haunted by a preposterous and feverish dread of the Jacobins; and this dread showed itself not merely in descriptions and denunciations, but in a very unwarrantable behaviour towards them soon after, in the business of the infernal machine. Why take such pains or make so great a merit of preventing this party from declaring *the country in danger* a little before this period? Whatever use they might have made of such a declaration, they were so far at least right in thinking some strong measures and a change of system necessary; for Buonaparte himself resorted to the strongest of all measures, the overthrow of the government, on the plea of the dangers and distresses of the country. How then could he consistently blame their reasonings or their object, though he might disapprove of the mode of carrying that object into effect, or of the extent to which they might push it? They were in fact the only men of active and energetic character opposed to him in the career of power and popularity; and besides, he might be disgusted with the excesses they had already committed and which might be renewed, and which appeared to

have so little tendency to strengthen their cause. He preferred *his* weapons to theirs, not less from taste than policy. A battle gained was a new pillar or trophy added to the Temple of Liberty: a civil massacre only turned it into a shambles slippery with blood, where it was unsafe to stand and disagreeable to enter. There was certainly something repulsive and sickening in the disproportion between the violence of the means and the stability of the end produced by these men. Theirs was only an extreme remedy, which was to be avoided as long as possible. Another reign of terror, followed by another *reaction* (its natural consequence), could hardly have failed to lead, by a revolting gradation, to the return of the ancient *régime*. Buonaparte had no such ground of objection to Siéyes's party, who were neither men of active habits nor of strong passions, and whose fine-spun theories could be easily made to give way to circumstances, and their paper constitutions pierced by the sword. They were the *ideal* party, who in all cases are more intent upon forming speculations than on realising them, and who, though they may be troublesome associates, are seldom formidable rivals. There was a third party which Buonaparte had to keep at bay, that of the royalists and foreign princes; and it was his triumph over this, and his fitness and determination to contend against it, redoubling blows on blows, and victories on victories, that secured him the co-operation and good wishes of the great body of the state and of the most constant lovers of liberty. If the Revolution had been firmly and securely established without him, and he had erased or undermined the stately fabric, to raise his own power upon the ruins, then he would have been entitled to the execration of the friends of freedom, and would have received the thanks of its hereditary enemies: but the building had already been endangered and nodded to its fall, had been defaced and broken in pieces by internal discord and by foreign war; and the arch of power

and ambition that he reared stood on ground forfeited over and over again to humanity; the laurels that he won, and the wreathed diadem he wore, were for having during fifteen years avenged the cause of liberty by triumphing over its insolent and unrelenting foes, and thus shielding its sacred name from insult. It was not till after his fall that liberty became a by-word, and that the warning voice was once more addressed to mankind—" *Discite justitiam moniti, et non temnere reges!*"



## CHAPTER XXIII.

## PROVISIONAL CONSULS.

First sitting of the Provisional Consuls ; modelling of the ministry ; insurrections against the new government ; several deputies banished ; religious toleration decreed ; death of Pope Pius VI. ; La Fayette and other emigrants permitted to return ; conciliatory acts of the provisional government ; suppression of the disturbances in the west of France ; improvement in public affairs, framing of the new constitution ; the Abbé Siéyes's theory of government ; Napoleon's objections ; the constitution, appointing Buonaparte First Consul, approved by the people.

ON the morning of the 11th of November, 1799, the new consuls held their first sittings. Buonaparte took the chair and Maret was appointed secretary, in the room of Lagarde, who had held that situation under the Directory. Maret, a native of Dijon, who afterwards figured as Duke of Bassano and was greatly attached to Napoleon, was a man of mild manners and of considerable ability. He was attached to the early principles of the Revolution, but had fled during the reign of Robespierre, and was arrested by the Austrians with Semonville as he crossed Lombardy on his way to Venice. After the 9th of Thermidor (which put an end to the power of Robespierre) he was exchanged for Madame, the daughter of Louis XVI., then a prisoner in the Temple.

The first sitting of the consuls lasted several hours. Siéyes had not been without hopes that Napoleon would interfere only with military matters, and would leave the regulation of civil affairs to him ; and he was much surprised when he found that Napoleon had formed settled opinions on policy, finance, and jurisprudence, and in short on all the branches of

administration; that he supported his arguments with clearness, and was not easily turned from his purpose. In the evening, on returning home, he said aloud in the presence of Chazal, Talleyrand, Boulay, Rœderer, Cabanis, and others, "Gentlemen, you have a master: Napoleon *will* do all, and *can* do all without your assistance. In our situation, it is better to submit than to encourage dissensions which must end in certain ruin."

The first act of government was the new-modelling of the ministry. Dubois de Crancé was minister-at-war, but was so little fitted for or attentive to his office, that he could not furnish the consuls with a single report on the state of the army. Berthier was appointed in his stead, who was a month before he could collect materials for drawing up a proper report. When Dubois de Crancé was asked, "You pay the army; you can surely give us a return of the pay?" the answer was, "We don't pay it." "You victual the army; let us have the returns of the victualling office?"—"We don't victual it." "You clothe the army; let us see the statements of the clothing?"—"We don't clothe it." The army at home was paid by robbing the treasury; abroad, it was subsisted and clothed by means of requisitions, and the war-office exercised no kind of control. The army in Holland, which had just repulsed the English, was in good condition, as the Dutch, according to treaty, had to supply all its wants. But those of the Rhine, of Switzerland, and Italy were in a state of lamentable privation and of the greatest insubordination. As soon as the reform of the war-department was effected, discipline was easily restored. The post of minister of finance was held by Robert Lindet, who had been a member of the committee of public safety under Robespierre, an honest man, and accounted an able financier at a time when the true minister of finance was the printer of the assignats. Lindet was succeeded by Gaudin, afterwards Duke of Gaeta, who had been long employed in that department. The treasury was

empty; there was not wherewithal to dispatch a courier in it. Nothing came into it but cheques, bills, notes, schedules, and paper of all kinds, on which the receipts of the army had been consumed by anticipation. The contractors being paid in drafts themselves, drew directly on the receivers, as fast as anything came into their hands; and yet they did no service. The rate of interest was at six per cent. Every source of supply was dried up; credit was in a great measure annihilated; all was disorder, waste, and destruction. The new minister, Gaudin, adopted measures which put a stop to these abuses and restored confidence. He suppressed the compulsory loan, which had produced as bad an effect on property as that which the law of hostages had produced on the liberty and safety of the people; raised twenty-four millions of francs on the sale of the domains of the House of Orange, which France had reserved to itself by the treaty of the Hague; made a saving of two millions yearly in the collection of the direct imposts; created a redemption fund, in which the receivers of taxes were obliged to deposit a twentieth part of their receipts; and put the forest-lands under the best regulation, from which, when properly managed, the republic was entitled to receive forty millions of francs a year. Such was the patriotic zeal and conscientious integrity of the new minister, that he would not go to bed or sleep a single night, after he had received the portfolio of finance, till he had devised a scheme for abolishing some of the most glaring abuses in his department. All that he did or proposed at this early period, he strengthened and perfected during fifteen years of an able administration. He never had occasion to withdraw any of his measures, because his knowledge was practical, the fruit of long and attentive experience.

Cambaceres retained the administration of justice, and Reinhard that of foreign affairs. Talleyrand was still unpopular, particularly on account of his conduct in regard to America; and besides, till the

government was established and put into an imposing attitude, it was not the time for him to come forward as a negotiator, or to play his cards to advantage. Bourdon resigned the admiralty to Forfait, a native of Normandy, with a great reputation as a naval architect, but who turned out a mere projector. The consuls also found they had been mistaken in appointing Laplace to succeed Quinette as minister of the interior. This great geometrician proved totally inadequate to the post that was assigned him: he sought for subtleties in the most common things, looked at every question in a problematical point of view, and carried the doctrine of the infinite divisibility of matter into the business of the state. Hitherto the official appointments made by the consuls had been unanimous; their first difference of opinion arose with respect to the minister of police. Fouché had the character of being sanguinary, venal, insincere. Siéyes detested him, and considered the government as insecure while he presided over the police. Napoleon wished to retain him, and remarked that with all his faults, he had been serviceable to the Republic. "We are creating a new era," he said; "in the past we must remember only the good, and forget the evil. Time, habits of business, and reflection, have formed many able men, and modified many indifferent characters." This is not a just view of human nature in general, which never changes; nor did the present instance turn out an exception to the common rule. Buonaparte was fond of playing with edged tools, thinking he could turn their good qualities to account, and by dexterous management prevent their hurting him. He could not well part with Fouché; the ability was an indispensable requisite, the want of principle was not so absolute an objection as perhaps it ought to have been. The department of the Posts was given to Lafôret, who had been consul-general in America. The Polytechnic School was then only in its infancy. The charge of it was given to Monge, under whose

direction it became one of the most celebrated in the world, and rendered the most important services to the country in every department, whether of peace or war.

The new government, in spite of its activity and attention to the public interest, had still many enemies to contend with. When we do not acknowledge the right to power, the abuse of it is the only thing that can reconcile us to it. Wise or salutary measures in that case irritate our dislike and opposition by rendering it hopeless. Insurrections broke out in La Vendée, Languedoc, and the Netherlands. The Royalist party, which for many months had been gaining strength, was severely mortified at a change that threatened to crush all their expectations. The anarchists and defeated members of the Manège kept Siéyes in continual alarm, who once came in the greatest agitation and awoke Napoleon at three in the morning, to tell him of some plot of which the police had just informed him. "Let them come," replied the latter; "in war as well as in love we must come to close quarters to make an end of it. It may as well be settled one day as another." The law of the 19th of Brumaire had enjoined the government to provide measures for restoring the public tranquillity. Fifty-five members had been expelled from the legislative body; and as they did not desist from their machinations and refused to quit Paris, they with some other party-leaders were sentenced to banishment, thirty-seven to Guiana, and twenty-two to the island of Oleron. This decree, which was thought too violent at the time, had the effect of dispersing the disaffected, but was merely held *in terrorem* over them for a while, and was never carried into execution. By degrees the people felt assured; addresses came pouring in from every quarter; and the government, confident of its increasing strength, did all in its power to mitigate the rage of parties and close up old wounds. The *law of hostages*, which had been passed in July 1799, and by means of which

great numbers of individuals had been thrown into prison, as the relations of emigrants and persons bearing arms against the Republic, was repealed. During the ascendancy of the Theophilanthropists (such was the power of intolerance and the narrowness of party spirit) little attention was paid to the distinction between refractory priests and those who had submitted to the oaths ; some had been sent to the Isle of Rhé, some to Guiana, some into foreign countries, and others languished in prison. It was agreed upon as a principle by the provisional government, that conscience was not amenable to the law, and that the right of the sovereign extended no farther than to the exaction of obedience and fidelity. Napoleon, who had had occasion to see and reflect much on religious questions, and on the subject of toleration both in Italy and Egypt, lost no time in putting a stop to this species of persecution, no longer called for by the circumstances of the times. It was decreed that every priest banished or imprisoned, who would take an oath of fidelity to the established government, should immediately be restored to his liberty. Within a short time after the passing of the law, more than twenty thousand persons of this class returned to their families. Only a few of the most bigoted or ignorant persisted in their obstinacy and remained in exile. At this period also, the law of the *décades* was repealed, the churches were again opened to public worship, and pensions were granted to persons of both sexes under religious vows, who took the oath of fidelity to the government. Nothing is more difficult than to draw the line in such cases, or to know where to stop in the nice interval between true liberality and officious interference. Thus the allowing persons of both sexes to devote themselves to monastic vows, if their conscience pricks them, and they so chose it, is a dictate of the true principles of toleration, it is their affair, and no business of the government ; but that it is no business of the government to encourage this sort of indolent seclusion by

positive rewards, and to grant pensions to those who may incline to it, seems equally certain, and a consequence of the same doctrine of absolute neutrality in questions of a theological nature. Pope Pius VI. had died not long before at Valence, at the age of eighty-two. In passing through that town, Napoleon had learnt that no funeral honours had been paid to him, and that his corpse was laid in the sacristy of the cathedral. A decree of the consuls ordered that the customary honours should be rendered to his remains, and a marble monument raised over his tomb. It was an homage paid by the First Consul and the majority of the French nation to an unfortunate sovereign and the head of the church. So far all was well ; but persons and principles are closely connected together in the human mind, and respect is seldom shown to one without an intention of favouring the other. It is from the rare union of moderation and firmness, that liberality is so apt to be suspected of something insidious, and that favours or lenity shown to an adversary are considered as treachery to your own party. It was on this account that the erasure of the members of the Constituent Assembly, who had formally acknowledged the sovereignty of the people, from the list of emigrants, occasioned great uneasiness. "The emigrants," it was said, "will return in crowds ; the royalist party will raise its head, as it did in Fructidor ; the republicans will be massacred." In virtue of this law, the excellent and blameless La Fayette, Latour-Maubourg, and Bureau de Puzy returned to France, and to the peaceful enjoyment of their property, which had not been alienated. It was at least worth while to excite some alarm, and even to run some risk, for the purpose of restoring a man like La Fayette to his country, who, in the dungeons of Olmutz, only longed to know the success of the cause of liberty, which was kept concealed from him ; and whose only thought since seems to be whether any good can be done for the cause of mankind.

It had happened some years before, that a vessel

which had left England for La Vendée, having on board nine persons belonging to some of the oldest families of France — Talmonts, Montmorencies, and Choiseuls, had been wrecked on the coast of Calais. These passengers were emigrants : they were arrested, and from that time had been dragged from prison to prison, from tribunal to tribunal, without having their fate decided. Their arrival in France was not a voluntary act ; but they were seized on account of their supposed place of destination. They affirmed indeed that they were on their way to India, but the vessel and its stores proved that they were going to La Vendée. Without entering into that point, Napoleon conceived that the condition of these unfortunate people rendered them inviolable, and that they were under the laws of hospitality. He had in fact already decided a similar question in the year 1794, when as general of artillery he was engaged in fortifying the coasts of the Mediterranean. Some members of the Chabillant family, on their passage from Spain to Italy, had been taken by a privateer and brought into Toulon : they were immediately thrown into prison, and the populace, believing they were emigrants, rose and would have massacred them. Napoleon availing himself of his popularity and of his influence over the cannoneers and workmen of the arsenal, who were foremost in the disturbance, saved this unhappy family. Dreading, however, another insurrection of the people, he concealed them in empty ammunition-waggons which he was sending to the Isles of Hyeres, and by this means they escaped. These two cases appear to be distinct : in the latter there is not a shadow of doubt, and one ceases to wonder that a people who had so little sense of reason or humanity as to treat those unhappy persons as criminals, should have shown themselves so little worthy of liberty. In the case of the passengers going to La Vendée, there is a doubt whether the government was not authorised to treat them like any other declared enemies—as if they had been English troops, for instance, thrown



upon the coast—that is, to detain them prisoners. But there is a scale of morality above the letter of the law : Buonaparte was right in both cases ; for whenever there is but an excuse and an opening for an act of magnanimity, it is right to take advantage of it. The generosity of the behaviour cannot be doubted, however the correctness of the reasoning may ; and noble and disinterested sentiments are the best safeguard of justice and liberty, by striking at the root of all that is mean and sordid.

Buonaparte in speaking of this event justly contrasts it with the conduct of the British government towards Napper Tandy and Blackwell, who after having been shipwrecked on the coast of Norway, were seized in crossing the neutral territory of Hamburg at the instigation of the British minister, and delivered up to execution as Irish rebels. The British envoy compelled the senate of Hamburg to make this unmanly surrender : “and who would believe it,” exclaims Napoleon, “all Europe rose up to second the demand !” Who would *not* believe it at a time when all Europe was drunk with the rage of social order, and deaf to all but the siren sounds of legitimacy ? Napper Tandy was not at Hamburg by choice but necessity ; he was not there taking advantage of a neutral territory to hatch plots against the government or to take away the life of the King of England. In the last case, I should not have a word to say against his arrest, though contrary to forms, and though the same Europe would have rung with the justice of his seizure and the aggravated enormity of his guilt. The senate of Hamburg had yielded on its part to the importunity of legitimate Europe before the 18th of Brumaire : shortly after that event, they sent a long letter of apology to the head of the government, who did not admit of the validity of their excuses. They afterwards sent a deputation to the Tuileries to implore oblivion, and to urge their weakness. “You had at least the resource of weak states,” said Napoleon, “that of letting your prisoners escape.”

Hitherto the French government had supported French prisoners in England, while the latter country supported English prisoners in France. The consular government succeeded in altering this arrangement, which was detrimental to France; as there were more French prisoners than English, and as provisions were dearer in England than in France. Each nation became from this time responsible for the support of the prisoners it detained.

The oath of hatred to royalty was suppressed as useless and contrary to the majesty of the Republic, which, acknowledged as it was on all sides, stood in no need of such support. There was also another reason; that it was as well to get rid of this oath of hatred to royalty before it swore allegiance to a new monarch, an event which there is every ground to suppose Buonaparte considered as at this period very possible. It was also resolved, that the anniversary of the 21st of January should no longer be observed as a festival. Of this subject I have spoken already, nor do I see occasion to change what I have said: on the contrary, Buonaparte's anxiety to wash out the memory of that event only made it more necessary that he should be reminded of it; for in proportion as he forgot it, the more he forgot himself and his real and only durable pretensions. The ostensible object of the provisional government, however, was to rally and unite all parties, and to efface whatever could excite irritation or animosity. Offices were studiously bestowed on men of all parties and of moderate opinions. The effect of this proceeding was visible and instantaneous: men of all parties were disposed to rally round the standard of what bid so fair to be a national government: he who just before was ready to throw himself into the arms of the emissaries of the Bourbons hesitated, and once more sided with the country. The foreign faction was for a moment disconcerted, but soon conceived hopes of making use of Napoleon as an instrument to bring back the Bourbons; for bigotry and prejudice, unlike reason and philo-

sophy, never despair; and there is no chance, however absurd, that in their pertinacity and the servile subjection of their imagination to their habitual convictions, they do not catch at. Buonaparte had an interview with two of the chief agents of this party, Hyde de Neuville and Dandigné, the one a young man of talent, the other a wild fanatic. They laboured to persuade him that his wisest course would be to restore the old dynasty, and consolidate his own power by the help of theirs: he strove to make use of them as instruments to gain over the Vendean chiefs. Each finding the other inflexible, they parted without any wish to renew the intercourse.

The troubles in Toulouse, in the South, and in Belgium were gradually appeased, as the principles and intentions of the new government developed themselves. Nevertheless, the Vendéans and Chouans still disturbed eighteen departments of the Republic. Chatillon, their chief, had taken Nantes; and they replied to all the proclamations of the Directory by counter-proclamations, boldly asserting their resolution to restore the throne and the altar. But about this time a change took place in their feelings: worn out with endless struggles, alarmed at the force which Napoleon sent against them, but still more dazzled by his reputation, they listened to terms of accommodation. Soldiers of fortune themselves, daring and adventurous leaders, for the first time there was a sympathy between them and the head of the government; and their dislike of the cause for a time gave way to their admiration of the man. Chatillon, Suzannet, D'Antichamp, and the Abbé Bernier, the leaders of the insurrection on the left of the Loire, submitted and signed a treaty with General Hedouville at Montluçon, on the 17th January, 1800. Bernier was rector of St. Lo, and exercised great influence over his flock. He came to Paris, and attached himself to the First Consul, by whom he was employed to negotiate the Concordat, and was afterwards made bishop of Orleans. Georges and La

Prevelay were at the head of the bands in Brittany, on the right of the Loire; Bourmont commanded those of the Maine, Frotté those of Normandy. La Prevelay and Bourmont submitted, and came to Paris. Georges and Frotté chose to keep on the war. It gave them an opportunity under colour of political motives to indulge in every species of licentiousness and pillage; to lay the rich under contribution on pretence that they were the purchasers of national domains; to rob the public coaches because they carried the dispatches of the state; to break open the banking-houses, because they corresponded with the treasury. They kept up an intelligence with the vilest people in the capital, the keepers of gaming-houses and brothels, where they brought their plunder, and there learnt how to lay their snares and ambuscades for travellers on the road. Generals Chambarlhac and Gardanne entered the department of the Orne at the head of two moveable columns to secure Frotté. This young chief, who was active and full of stratagems, was surprised at the house of Guidal, commandant at Alençon, who betrayed him. He was tried and shot. Georges maintained himself in Morbihan with the assistance of the money and arms which he had received from England. Attacked, beaten, and hemmed in at Grand-Champ by General Brune, he capitulated, and promised to live a good and peaceable subject. He solicited permission to be presented to Napoleon, who endeavoured to make the same impression on him as on some other Vendean chiefs, but in vain. The war in the West being thus brought to a conclusion, many good regiments were disposable for foreign service.

The provisional government interfered but little with continental politics. Some uneasiness had been excited by an army which Prussia was raising at the time of the Duke of York's landing in Holland. Duroc, Napoleon's aide-de-camp, was dispatched to Berlin with a letter for the king. He had every reason to be satisfied with his reception, and with the

apparent disposition of the cabinet. The Prussian court was filled with military men, who delighted to listen to the accounts of the wars in Italy and Egypt (the truth here having almost the air of a romance) and who were also gratified that the soldiers in France had taken the reins of the government out of the hands of the lawyers. Paul I. also, the autocrat of all the Russias, the most arbitrary and self-willed of mortals, had always entertained a great antipathy to the Revolution and the Republic, but piqued by the opposition of the English, or struck with some touches of his own humour in Napoleon, he suddenly turned round and conceived a vast admiration and predilection for the character of the First Consul. Buonaparte was probably allured by these first and imperfect successes to hope for the establishment of a thorough fellow-feeling, and an entire amalgamation of policy and interests with the other continental courts.

While the state of public affairs thus continued to improve, the labour of remodelling the constitution drew towards an end: the consuls and the two committees were incessantly employed on it. According to law, the two councils were to meet on the 19th of February 1800: the only method of preventing them was to promulgate the new constitution, and offer it to the acceptance of the people before that epoch. The three consuls, and the two intermediate committees resolved themselves into a committee for that purpose during the month of December in Napoleon's apartment, from nine in the evening till three in the morning. Daunou acted as secretary. The confidence of the assembly chiefly rested upon the reputation and experience of Siéyes. The constitution that he had by him in his portfolio had been much extolled. He had thrown out some hints concerning it, which were eagerly caught up by his numerous admirers, and which through them found their way to the public, seeming to justify the eulogium which Mirabeau passed upon him, when he said, "the silence of Siéyes is a national calamity." He had indeed made himself

known by several pamphlets which evinced thought and acuteness. He it was also who originally suggested to the third estate the idea of declaring itself a National Assembly; he likewise proposed the oath of the Jeu de Paume, not to separate till they had drawn up a constitution; and France was indebted to him (as has been already observed) for its division into departments. He professed to have composed a theory respecting representative government and the sovereignty of the people, full of useful ideas, which were laid down as fundamental principles. The committee expected to have this long-meditated scheme laid before them, and that they should have nothing to do but to deliberate upon and ratify it. At the first sitting, however, Siéyes said nothing: he acknowledged that he had a great accumulation of materials by him, but they were neither classed nor digested. At the following sitting he read a report on lists of notables. He afterwards detailed, bit by bit, and letting out the grand secret by degrees, and with a great deal of pomp and preparation, the theory of his constitutional jury, and at last came to the government. *Mons parturiens—mus nascitur.* How different is all this from the simplicity and ardour of a great mind in the enunciation of a great discovery, respecting which the author, entertaining no doubt himself, makes no mystery of it to others, and seeing it all under one point of view, and by a sort of intuition, is impatient only lest they should not seize it with the same force, and is eager to communicate the whole of it by a single breath! The Abbé Siéyes's plans were not of this condensed or convincing description: they were neither practical nor theoretical, neither deductions from abstract reason, nor dictates of common sense, but a strange tissue of vague assumptions and frivolous excuses, of general doctrines spun to the most attenuated thread, or suddenly snapped asunder at the author's pleasure or convenience, and then pieced together again by some idle verbiage or technical nomenclature. They show in as striking a

degree as almost any other abortions of the kind the power of the mind to make plausible arrangements of words without meaning, and to satisfy itself with its own pedantic trifling. This first essay, from its unsatisfactory issue, and from the great reputation of the man, must have tended to inspire Buonaparte with a very indifferent opinion of the constitution-mongers and ideologists of France, and have made him indignant at having his will and power thwarted by such shadows and mockeries of reasoning. According to the Abbé Siéyes's alternate plan of nominal abstractions and voluntary expedients to suspend them, all power, all sovereignty, all right originated from, and was to be acknowledged in the people; but although it emanated from them, it was not to reside there a moment; for this title of theirs to choose their own government having been recognised as an undoubted and indefeasible right (*pro formâ*) it was for fear of any abuse or inconvenience that might result from it, without rhyme or reason, to be instantly taken from them, and made over to a number of persons who were to appoint another set who were to choose their representatives and officers of government for them. Now all this seems going out of one's way to lay down a plausible theoretical principle merely to overturn it in practice, or to perplex the common practice and routine of society by an idle theoretical principle. If the choice of the government or of the legislature, by this intricate and artificial process, is ultimately to be very different from what the majority by popular election would have come to, why tantalize them with the mockery of choosing their own governors? If it is substantially the same, why not allow them to exercise their natural and inherent right without a proxy, and without a refinement in policy, which is either an impertinence or an injustice? If the people are to be kept in leading-strings, why compliment them with rights which they are unfit to exercise, and why not give to their betters the real management of the state both in appearance and reality? By this lame,

contradictory scheme, the people would not gain their real friends and favourites as their guardians and attorneys in the government; while the government would be deprived of some of its tried and ablest servants, who might not happen to be included in the lists of *notability*. The whole is a system of evasion and cross-purposes; or it is giving up the essence and vital principle of popular government under a pretence of adhering to the name and forms. In like manner, the legislative body, when they met, were not to discuss or debate upon the laws they were to pass, but were to vote and determine by ballot upon them after hearing the different arguments and objections brought forward by a hundred Tribunes, who were not to originate the laws themselves, but to receive them from a council of state named by the government. That is to say, those who were to decide upon the different questions, and ought to be supposed the wisest and the best judges, were not to give their reasons at all, or to influence one another's opinions, but were to be at the mercy of a number of noisy and professed disputants, who were to discuss in their hearing, and for their benefit measures, not which they had thought of, and which, having had their source in their own bosoms and reflections, they might be conceived to understand, but which were proposed to them by the government, and which they were to take up as a lawyer does his brief; so that in fact the government, which is always looked upon with suspicion in the representative system, would have the initiative in all laws and enactments, would make the tribunate in a manner its organ; and the legislative or deliberating council of the nation could only oppose to this lively and formidable battery of eloquence and power the *vis inertiae* of gravity and silence.

Again, the government was to be a government and no government. A supreme power was to be vested in the hands of a grand elector, who was to be chosen by the senate, not accountable to it, and yet removable by it at pleasure; he was to do



nothing himself, but to choose others to do everything for him; he was to have a consul for peace and a consul for war, and each was to be perfectly independent of him and of the other. That is, in every department of the state there was to be power, but then it could do nothing; there was to be liberty, but then the exercise of it was vested in some other person; there was to be independence, but an impossibility of mutual co-operation and concert. A thing was no sooner granted than it was clogged with some impracticable condition; a form was no sooner established than all power of life and motion was taken from it, either from fear of its abuse, or in the sheer spirit of contradiction. Siéyes came last to the last point, the executive government, probably expecting there to see an end of his shuffling and nugatory system. This was the capital, the most prominent part of so beautiful a piece of architecture, which he approached with considerable tenderness, but laying prodigious stress upon it. He proposed in this view a grand elector for life, to be chosen by the conservative senate; to possess a revenue of six millions of livres, with a guard of 3000 men, and to reside in the palace of Versailles; foreign ambassadors were to be accredited to him, and he was to furnish credentials to the French ambassadors and ministers of foreign courts. All acts of government, all laws, and all judicial proceedings were to be in his name. He was to be the sole representative of the national glory, power, and dignity; he was to nominate two consuls, one for peace, and the other for war; but to these points his influence was to be confined. It is true he was to have the power of removing the consuls and of replacing them by others; but at the same time the senate was to be entitled, when it should deem such an exercise of power arbitrary or opposed to the national interest, to *merge the grand elector*. The effect of this merger was to be equivalent to a removal; the post became vacant; but by way of

compensation, the grand elector was to have a seat in the senate for the rest of his life.

Napoleon had said but little in the preceding sittings, as he had no experience in such matters. He could only refer on this subject to Siéyes, who had participated in the formation of the constitutions of 1791, 1793, and 1795; to Daunou, who was accounted one of the principal framers of the latter; and to about twenty or thirty members of the committees, who had all distinguished themselves in legislating, and who took the greater interest in the creation of those bodies which were to make the laws, inasmuch as they were to be themselves component parts of them. But the government concerned himself; he therefore rose to oppose this part of the plan. "The grand elector," he said, "if he confine himself strictly to the functions you assign him, will be but the shadow, the mere fleshless shadow of a *Roi fainéant*. And how do you think it possible that any man, either of the smallest talent or honour, would submit to the situation of a fatted hog in a sty with some millions a year at his disposal? If he should choose to abuse his prerogative, you give him absolute power. If, for example, I became grand elector, when I appointed the consul for war and the consul for peace, I would say to them, if you nominate a single minister, if you sign a single act without my previous approbation, I will remove you. But you reply, the senate in its turn will merge the grand elector. This is worst of all; nobody at this rate has any guarantee. In another point of view what will be the situation of these two prime ministers? One will have the ministers of justice, of the interior, of police, of finance, and of the treasury under his control; the other those of the marine, of war, of external relations. The first will be surrounded only by judges, administrators, financiers, men of the long robe; the other only by epaulettes and military men—the one will be wanting money and recruits for his

armies, the other will not furnish any. Such a government would be a monstrous chimera, composed of heterogeneous parts, and presenting nothing rational. It is a great mistake to suppose that the shadow of a thing can be of the same use as the thing itself."

Siéyes answered these objections unsatisfactorily. His plan of a grand elector (an office which he himself had probably some design of filling) fell to the ground; and he himself was soon after merged in his own theories, with the estate of Crosne voted to him as a national recompence for his many previous services. Having strengthened the government by taking it into his own hands as Consul, with Cambacères and Lebrun for his coadjutors, Buonaparte left the representative part of the system to shift for itself, and this was made up of the wreck of Siéyes's senate, tribunate, and legislative body, which, however, were chosen by the consuls without waiting for the lists of notability; thus verifying Mr. Burke's sarcasm on the Abbé's constitutions—"some where the electors choose the representatives, and others where the representatives choose the electors," &c. The constitution of the year VIII. was published and submitted to the people on the 13th of December, and sanctioned by three millions eleven thousand and seven votes. The new government was established on the 24th of the same month. Buonaparte thus gained his great object, which was to give unity and vigour to the government; and which, whether we consider the demands of his own ambition or the necessities of the state, was perhaps the principal thing. The enemies of the revolution had prevented it from having a happy and tranquil termination; and all that remained was to take care that they did not exult in their iniquity, and profit by their own wrong. The consular government, however arbitrary in its form, or in many of its decisions, was essentially popular in its principles and objects; for it had no other strength to appeal to than the final approbation

of the people or of a large part of it. It was founded in no prejudice by which it could brave the opinions and feelings of the whole community; and it must be some time before the head of the consular or imperial government could take upon him to ruin the country like a *Roi fainéant* or as a state privilege!

During the month of December Buonaparte's health was much shaken. These nightly sittings and long discussions, in which he was forced to listen to so much nonsense, wasted time that was precious to him, yet were nevertheless in a certain degree interesting to him. He remarked that many men who wrote well and were not without eloquence, were yet entirely devoid of solidity of judgment, and argued most miserably. He inferred from hence that there are persons who are gifted by nature with the faculty of writing and expressing their thoughts well, as others are with a genius for music, painting, or sculpture. Public affairs, on the contrary, require deep thought, correct discrimination, and a power of forming conclusions answering to the results of things in reality. Cambacères, who was chosen second consul, was of a noble family in Languedoc, and an able lawyer: Lebrun, the third consul, was from Normandy, had formerly been employed by the Chancellor Maupeou in drawing up his decrees, was distinguished for the purity and elegance of his style, and sincerely attached to the Revolution; to which he himself owed all his advantages, his family being originally of the class of peasants.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

## THE CONSULATE.

Installation of the consular government at the Tuileries; order of the day issued by the First Consul on the death of Washington; first presentation of the diplomatic body; favourable effects of the new government; evenings at St. Cloud; court of Madame Buonaparte; gradual introduction of courtly refinements; Napoleon gives his step-daughter Hortense in marriage to Louis.

THE consuls on leaving St. Cloud, November 10th, 1799, had taken up their residence at the Luxembourg, in the same apartments which had been lately occupied by the Directory. But the new constitution had raised the consular power above the other authorities of the state, and it felt itself not sufficiently at ease there to represent the majesty of the French people. The government, on the 19th of February, 1800, after the adoption of the constitution of the year VIII., proceeded to instal itself at the palace of the Tuileries; and the first consul from that time took up his abode there.

The procession left the Luxembourg in carriages, in full costume, with music and a guard. It was not a brilliant display; there were only a few private carriages, the rest were hackney-coaches, having the numbers on them covered over with paper. No sooner had the first consul arrived at the Tuileries, than he mounted on horseback and gave a review. Afterwards each of the ministers presented to him the different persons employed in his department of the state. Thus then we behold the first magistrate of the Republic installed in the palace where everything still breathed the recollection of its ancient kings. It was just at this moment that the news of the

death of Washington was received. He had died on the 14th of the preceding December, at the age of sixty-eight years, at a private country house in Virginia, having secured the independence of his country as a general, its liberty as a legislator, and its prosperity as a magistrate. What, it may be asked, hindered Buonaparte from imitating his example? Had the allied troops been removed three thousand miles off on the other side of the Atlantic, had the French been a colony of English settlers, and in France there had been no palace of her ancient kings, there was nothing to prevent it!

The First Consul did not neglect this opportunity of showing his respect to the character of the hero of American liberty; his death was announced to the Consular Guard and to all the troops of the Republic, in the following order of the day:—"Washington is dead. This great man fought against tyranny; he established the liberty of his country. His memory must always be dear to the French people, as well as to all the free of both worlds, and especially to the French soldiers, who, like him and his American troops, fight in defence of liberty and equality. In consequence, the First Consul has ordered, that for the space of ten days black crape shall be hung on all the colours and standards of the Republic."

The first presentation of the diplomatic body took place on the 2nd of March. Benezech, counsellor of state, who was charged with the interior regulation of the palace, introduced the foreign ministers into the apartment of the consuls, where were the several ministers, the counsellors of state, the secretary of state, and the secretary of the consuls. The minister of the interior received them at the entrance of the apartment; the minister of foreign affairs presented them to the First Consul. The diplomatic body at that time consisted of the ambassadors of Spain and of Rome, the ministers of Prussia, of Denmark, of Sweden, of Baden and Hesse-Cassel, and of the ambassadors from the Cisalpine, Batavian, Helvetian,

and Ligurian Republics. People had then so high an idea of the dignity of civil employments, and they still regarded the service of the court as so little honourable, that the counsellors of state were somewhat scandalized to see the veteran minister of the interior, one of their colleagues, with the usher's rod in his hand, acting the part of master of the ceremonies, and even of *maitre d'hôtel* to the First Consul. Benezech was supple and obliging, but a thoroughly good and honest man, and much more adapted to business than the attendance of the antechamber. There were as yet no titled officers called chamberlains; the aides-de-camp of the First Consul performed the duty; but that savoured too strongly of the general to be of long duration. The ministers and the council of state surrounded the consuls on public occasions: they formed the whole government united. But it seemed clear to penetrating observers that the Tuileries would soon have a regular court and established etiquette, as a temple is nothing without altars and a priesthood.

The order of the receptions was regulated as follows: on the 2nd and 17th of each month, the ambassadors; on the 3rd day of the *décade*, the senators and generals; on the 4th, the members of the legislative body; on the 6th, the tribunes and the tribunal of cassation were admitted. Every fifth day (of the *décade*) at noon there was a grand parade. It was a thing quite new to the greater part both of the actors and spectators, this commencement of a court. Each of the directors had had his own circle of society, in which the simple and unaffected tone of common life prevailed: they were not much frequented. Barras alone had kept up a sort of public drawing-room; but only a fifth part of the power or consequence belonged to him, while the First Consul had the whole to himself. He was severe in the choice of the society of Madame Buonaparte; it was composed, since the 18th of Brumaire, of the wives of the different public functionaries, civil and military; and they formed the first *nucleus* of the court. For them as well as for their

husbands the transition had been a little abrupt. The graceful ease and goodness of disposition of Madame Buonaparte reconciled those who were startled at the imposing etiquette of the palace, and above all, by the rank and glory of the First Consul. The court was then what it ought to be, not numerous but decent. The title of *Madame* was generally given to women at the First Consul's drawing-rooms and in the cards of invitation which were issued—a return to the ancient custom which shortly spread through the rest of the community.

The First Consul being once established at the Tuileries, it was but natural that he should have a palace in the country corresponding to the one he had in the capital. It was thought that Malmaison, the modest retreat of General Buonaparte, could no longer suit the chief of a great Republic. Among the ancient royal residences in the vicinity of the metropolis, St. Cloud was most conveniently situated. The inhabitants of the place presented an address to the Tribune to offer the choice of the *château* to the First Consul. He on this occasion declared to the commission appointed to make the proposal, “that he would accept of nothing from the people during the term of his magistracy, nor for a year after its functions had ceased; and that if at a later period they should think fit to apply to him the article of the constitution which decreed rewards to the warriors who had rendered signal services to the Republic, then he would accept with gratitude the offerings of the people; and that his intention was in the meantime to propose it to the legislative body to award recompences to the warriors who had distinguished themselves by their high deeds and their disinterestedness, as the surest way to stifle all the seeds of corruption and to reform the public morals.” The petition was therefore simply referred to the government.

The costumes and the *insignia* of authority underwent an alteration. The Greek and Roman dresses disappeared, and were replaced by military fashions.



The First Consul had more the appearance of a general than of a statesman ; but along with the boots and sword he wore a coat of the French make, and it was clearly to be seen that everything tended to the *civil side*. At the head of the acts of government a vignette had hitherto represented the Republic in the form of a woman seated, dressed after the antique, holding a helm in one hand, and in the other a garland, with the inscription : *French Republic, Sovereignty of the People, Liberty, Equality. Buonaparte First Consul*. Instead of which these words were substituted : *In the name of the French People, the French Government*. The Sovereignty of the People, Liberty, and Equality were no longer retained.

The first act of Buonaparte on arriving at the Tuileries had been a review ; the court of the palace became the place of rendezvous for the troops. They were not idle parades. Now on foot, now on horseback, the First Consul traversed all the ranks, in order to become acquainted with the officers and men, and to make himself known to them. He entered into the most minute details respecting the equipment, the arming, the exercising, in a word, respecting all the wants of the men and those of the service. As general and chief magistrate, he dispensed, in the name of the nation, praise and blame, distinctions and rewards. He thus made the army pass constantly under the observation of the people of the capital, and of the inhabitants of the departments and strangers who happened to be at Paris. This sight excited a strong spirit of emulation among the soldiers of the different corps, and enhanced their dignity and their value in their own eyes. In these imposing displays the nation took a pride in its troops ; strangers learned to know and fear them ; all the world were struck with admiration of them. The First Consul was here seen to great advantage and in his proper element. He took a real pleasure in remaining for hours in the midst of all this military pomp, round which an immense multitude crowded and made their acclamations

resound, while his antechambers and saloons were thronged with courtiers and with distinguished public characters, who waited patiently for the favour of a word, a smile, or even a look. These reviews afforded the First Consul a brilliant opportunity to display before the eyes of the people and the army his indefatigable activity, his superiority in all that related to the military art, the source, the very essence of his glory, and to exercise over all bosoms the irresistible ascendant of power, of energy, of genius, and fortune united in a single individual. Was the day rainy or the sky covered with clouds? Often, as soon as the First Consul appeared, the rain ceased, the clouds were dispersed, the sun shone out: the multitude, always eager for the marvellous, and the courtiers, prodigal of flattery, cried out that he commanded even the elements, or was peculiarly favoured of heaven.

In less than a year a striking change had taken place. Before the 18th of Brumaire, everything had seemed to announce a speedy dissolution; at present, everything bore the stamp of public spirit and vigour. On all sides was discernible a lofty emulation in whatever was good, admirable, and great. There was a real desire to establish the new order of things; as at the commencement of the Revolution there had been to overturn the old one. An approach to the object in view was no longer made by tumult and disorder; a steady hand guided the movement, traced the route, and prevented deviations. When Buonaparte became Consul for life, the court was put, like his power, upon a regal footing. This was not, however, the affair of a moment. They compiled new codes of etiquette, and consulted the old courtiers and antiquated valets as to any trifling particular; "How ought that to be? how was that managed formerly?" were the questions always asked in the interior of the palace, and a reference was constantly made to the use and practice of the good old times. An anecdote is told as characteristic of the tone that prevailed at

this period, that on some occasion the Count of Narbonne having to present a letter to Buonaparte, instead of taking it in his hand, placed it on his hat and advanced with it obsequiously in that position. Buonaparte at first suspected some insult, and asked the meaning of this piece of effeminacy ; but being told that "it was always the way in which the Count presented a letter to Louis XVI.," he afterwards always cited the Count of Narbonne as the model of courtesy and politeness. There is nothing incredible in this story ; for the greatest strength is not incompatible with the greatest weakness in the same person. Those who wished for the restoration of the old system, which was only a very small number, or those who were taken with show and outward appearance, which is always the greater part of mankind, were delighted with this return to frivolity and with the importance attached to trifles.

The change was not effected without a sense of ridicule and awkwardness at first. Those who had been accustomed to the forms, the manners, the conventional phraseology and studied politeness of the old court, were greatly amused with the attempts of the new one to mimic them. It was not long, however, before this defect was remedied by practice, and the court of the First Consul might pretend in all respects to vie with the most brilliant periods of the monarchy. Here was found united whatever was most distinguished in the different classes of society, in the arts, in the sciences, in commerce, and in the liberal professions. Here too were to be met with a crowd of warriors, resplendent in fields of renown, the firm and invincible defenders of the Republic, and some of the most sounding names of the old nobility, who had veiled to the glory with which others had covered it. Youth, grace, beauty lent their charm ; and if virtue did not follow in the train, at least there was a greater attention shown to decorum and propriety of manners than had ever been paid to them under the ancient *régime*. One secret grief and latent cause of unpo-

pularity against Buonaparte, was his determination to suppress the licentiousness of manners that prevailed both before and after the Revolution. He was severe, and even rude to women who endeavoured to attract notice by freedom of dress or behaviour. It was expected that men and their wives should appear in society together—a thing unprecedented, and contrary to all ideas of *bon ton* in the good old times of religion and loyalty. It is true, the court had formerly taken the lead in vice and profligacy of every kind; and the example which it had set had, as usual, been greedily followed by the other classes of society. Buonaparte thought, by adopting and countenancing a different system, to stem the tide and to bring back a greater severity and sobriety of manners. But perhaps there was too much a tone of authority and arbitrary will in his manner of doing it. Vice is a plant that either grows wild or is easily reared in the hot-bed of fashion; virtue, which is of slower and more difficult growth, can only be engrafted on principle and conviction. Yet notwithstanding this rigid, marble exterior, and public homage to virtue, Buonaparte was constantly assailed by showers of lampoons, of which the writers and readers gratified in the most wanton manner either their political hatred or the pruriency of a depraved imagination. It was in allusion to one of these that Buonaparte said in the council of state, where it had been canvassed as a subject for legal prosecution, "It contains nothing but absurdities. It appears by what is said of me, that the author does not even know my physical constitution: he here supposes scenes of gallantry and intrigue, similar to those in the time of Louis XV. I am to be sure very much like those people; is it not so? I am also made to spend enormous sums in my excursions to Malmaison: everybody knows how I throw money out of the windows. A violent scene is described between me and Barbé-Marbois (the treasurer), from whom I had demanded fifteen millions for my journey to Lyon, which he refused to give me,

whereas it really cost me only fifty thousand francs." The author of this libel, a man of the name of Fouilloux, was arrested, and the list of his subscribers and patrons was seized, among whom were the Citizen Serbelloni, ambassador from the Italian Republic, the Marquis Luchesini, ambassador from Prussia, Count Marcoff, the Russian ambassador, and others, who, having invented and paid for these stories, probably believed them themselves, when they thought the world would receive them for undoubted truths. A crowd of foreigners, who were then at Paris, spread these sort of reports everywhere, and the English and German newspapers were thus supplied with an inexhaustible fund of calumny and abuse.

It was the Marquis Luchesini, mentioned above, who was sent as ambassador from Prussia in 1802, and on that occasion harangued the First Consul in Italian, which was thought a very *mal-adroit* piece of flattery for so consummate a courtier. He had been sent previously by the king his master, in the month of October 1800, to compliment Buonaparte on the establishment of the consular government. When Signor Luchesini arrived, the First Consul was at Malmaison, and from a balcony surveyed with attention the rich liveries of the lacqueys, and appeared struck with the brilliancy of the orders with which the envoy was decorated. This was remarked by those about him, and he was heard to say, "That has an imposing effect; such things are necessary for the people." That might be true; but in the present case, the head of the people, who envied such finery, was more the dupe of it and more a child than they.

The majority yielded to the stream; there were notwithstanding a few who opposed it, or inwardly repined to see the flower of the talents and spirit of the nation fashioned to a new servitude of idle forms and ceremonies, and the old and ridiculous court etiquette resumed with more alacrity than it had been laid aside. When this small band of true

and sterling patriots and friends of mankind (there might also be a mixture of spleen and jealousy in their motives) compared the First Consul of the year XI. with the First Consul of the year VIII., with the general of the army of Egypt, with Buonaparte, the scourge of royalty at Toulon, on the 13th of Vendemiaire, on the 18th of Fructidor, with the same Buonaparte, rousing the people of Italy from their long slavery by the sound of his victories, and with the accents of liberty, and planting other Republics by the side and in aid of that of France, they could not help crying out with some bitterness: "Behold, then, the end of so many fine discourses, of so many lofty sentiments, of so many glorious exploits? Was it, then, for this, only to retrace its steps, that the nation launched into a new career, which it bathed with its purest blood? What has become of so many promises, oaths, vows, and hopes? Are we, then, after all, no better than revolted slaves, who are doomed to forge again with their own hands the chains which they had broken?" Well was it when liberty had a voice like the turtle, and could afford to regret the past, and compare its sanguine hopes with their painful disappointment; when all had not been lost, even the right to complain; when the performance might be confronted with the principle, for the principle was not rooted from the earth; when the excesses of liberty, when the abuse of the power it had called forth were the burthen of the song, not its utter extinction, defeat, and ignominy; when, if freedom was lost for a time, its strength and sinews were left, independence, glory, revenge, scorn, and defiance heaped on its foes, and when itself had not become a reproach and a scoff among the nations! What would they have said (not the flies who flutter about every new glare or are scattered by every blast, but men of principle and firmness to look back to the past and forward to the future) could they have then foreseen the final issue of all their hopes? They could have

said nothing, for men complain only of remediable griefs, and are silent when the right to every good, to think, to feel, to be, is wrested from them !

The First Consul found his residence at the Tuileries dull, and at the same time without convenience or liberty. He passed the fine weather at Malmaison. Great in himself, in this unpretending retreat he appeared still greater. There, and long after, at St. Cloud, of which he took possession of his own accord, a year after he had capriciously refused it as a free gift from the people, his conversation formed the delight of those who knew him. The evenings passed there were evenings worthy of the gods. The scene resembled the famed gardens of Alcinous or some of the enchantments of Ariosto's pen, and is still remembered by those who were admitted to it, as a dream, a gorgeous shadow that has passed from the earth. Buonaparte took the lead in conversation, and it will appear in the course of this work that he had a right to do so. The man laid aside the ruler, and lost nothing by it. There was that striking union of personal desert and exalted station which is so rarely to be met with ; and is as enviable as it is rare. The subjects touched upon were of the most imposing kind ; and what a tone they must have received from the speakers ! Buonaparte had lost by degrees all the taciturnity and reserve of his youth ; his manner had become frank, communicative, unreserved and free in the highest degree. When he had a part to act in public, he did so ; but in private he delighted to throw off all disguise and pretension, and was perfectly natural and simple. His discourse, though generally serious and earnest, had a great attraction, for it was original, profound, characteristic, and full. It was never obscure, feeble, or vague, though often carried to excess ; but then it was from the strength of will and conscious power of the speaker. The greatest interest was excited wherever he came. The audience listened to and caught up with avidity his slightest words ; and no

wonder, when they had an echo through Europe and were almost a law to the world. Though not stiff or pedantic, he gave a preference to the society of men of science, both from the importance of their pursuits, and as they afforded a relief to political topics and feelings. On this account Laplace, Monge, Berthollet, Lavoisier, Chaptal were often admitted to long conversations with him, nor did a distinction so well merited excite any jealousy. Sometimes he relaxed so far as to join in the country-dances in the little balls which were given on Sundays at Malmaison. He acquitted himself but indifferently, embroiled the figure, and always called for the *Monaco*, as the easiest, and the one which he danced the least badly.

The Chief Consul showed most grace and personal dignity in exercising the troops. He looked well in uniform, and was perfectly at home on these occasions; still, in giving his common audiences, there was something imposing about him. He understood the art of making a man six feet high, who was not otherwise disposed to do so, stoop to him, or could assume a lofty port which left the tallest persons no advantage over him. Duroc had given notice that in future the Tuileries would be opened only on the 15th of every month, and the First Consul would give audience at St. Cloud every Sunday after hearing mass. These audiences were very numerous, and lasted several hours. They were composed of cardinals, bishops, senators, councillors of state, deputies, tribunes, generals, ambassadors, magistrates, private gentlemen and distinguished foreigners, royalists, and republicans, nobles and plebeians, whatever there was most conspicuous either among the French or other nations, all confounded together and on a footing of equality. The First Consul addressed almost every one. Sometimes occasion was taken to introduce private affairs; those showed most wisdom who confined themselves to merely paying their court.

From the audiences of the First Consul, it was the



custom to go to that of Madame Buonaparte. She had the foreign ladies of distinction presented to her. Already the names of Zamoiska, Potowski, Castel-Forte, Dorset, Gordon, Newcastle, Cholmondeley, Dolgorouki, Galitzin, were seen on the list; for persons of the highest rank in Europe were proud to do homage to the First Consul and his wife. Three days in the week a dinner was given to twelve or fifteen persons; and on these days Madame Buonaparte saw company in the evening. The circle, at first small, grew more numerous by degrees. There were a few card-tables set out for form's sake; and the First Consul, who generally made his appearance, sometimes sat down at one of them. There was less restraint at Malmaison than at St. Cloud; the etiquette became the stricter with the enlargement of the place. The First Consul did not merely make choice of St. Cloud in preference to Malmaison, as a summer residence; he remained there in the autumn and part of the winter, till the bad weather drove him into Paris. His object was in part by secluding himself here to be less in view, more difficult of access, and to surround himself with the mysteriousness of greatness. Everything around him hastened fast to become a copy of Versailles, and of all other courts, with a reserve however of certain essential differences.

One thing that formed a strong objection to the morning audiences at St. Cloud, was the mass that preceded them. Many of those who had to attend the First Consul hated the priests; most were indifferent to the worship itself; no one approved this kind of mockery of it. For nothing could be more artificial or theatrical—the actresses of the Opera being regularly hired to sing the praises of God. Neither was there room for three-fourths of the visitors, who formed groups and loitered about in the galleries. The First Consul, mortified at this lukewarmness, had the service performed an hour sooner than usual, saying that “it was to excuse those who had no inclination to attend it.”

By degrees, the dresses of the court changed almost entirely. The sword and silk stockings succeeded to the sabre and military boots. The First Consul, who never appeared but in uniform, had on the celebration of the 14th of July 1801, worn a dress of red Lyon silk, embroidered, but without ruffles and with a black stock. This dress seemed oddly chosen; nevertheless he was complimented upon it, all but the stock. He laughed and said, "There should be always something that has a military look; there is no harm in that." Gaudin, minister of finance, was one of the first who came to the audience at St. Cloud with his hair in a bag, and with lace. They followed this example by little and little to please the First Consul; but the attempt to return to the old fashion was for some time a real masquerade. One wore a cravat with a full-dress coat, another a stock with a plain coat, a third a bag, a fourth a queue; some had their hair powdered, the greater number were without powder; there were only no wigs. All these trifles were become important affairs. The old-fashioned hair-dressers were at war with the new. Every morning they looked at the head of the First Consul: if he had been once seen with powder, it would have been all over with one of the most healthy and convenient fashions introduced by the Revolution; hair in its natural state would have been exploded. This grave matter was agitated in the discussions of the ushers in waiting; but the First Consul could not make up his mind to this *reaction*, and every one was left at liberty to wear his hair as he liked. It was understood, however, to be more decent and more agreeable to the First Consul to wear powder and the hair tied. He had no objection to make others into puppets and pieces of costume, though he did not choose to become so himself. So amidst all the frippery of outward forms, he retained the same stern simplicity of character and self-possession. Foreigners in general, and particularly the English, who had their hair cropped and went abroad without powder, when they appeared at court,

powdered their heads, and fastened a bag to the collar of their coats.

The women who inclined to the ancient *régime* out of vanity and love of change, were notwithstanding the declared enemies of powder; they had their reasons. They trembled that the reform of dress should reach them, and that they might finish with large hoop-petticoats, after beginning with hind-curls and *toupets*. They were not unfounded in these conjectures, for the dowagers of the court of Louis XVI. maintained that no one could have the court-air with the Greek and Roman dresses, and that the corruption of manners was to be dated from heads *à-la-Titus*, and drapery displaying the shape. Madame Buonaparte was at the head of the opposition on this occasion: it belonged to the most graceful and elegant woman of the court to defend taste and good sense against the inroads of prescriptive barbarism. She hated every kind of restraint and ostentation. She often repeated her favourite saying: "How all this fatigues and annoys me! I have not a moment to myself. I was meant to be the wife of a labourer!" This simplicity of character and feeling was not confined to dress: she manifested the same unaffected modesty and good sense in resisting the encroachments of pomp and power; and in parting with her, Buonaparte lost his better genius. In this, it has been said, she had her own private ends to answer; but if her conduct had not also arisen from her natural character and from a regard to others, she would have been dazzled by the immediate grandeur, and would have overlooked remote and possible consequences. The heart gives better counsel than the head; for true friendship quickens our sense of the real interests of those we love.

Buonaparte seldom entered into long conversations with women; nor did the severity of his character easily descend to gallantry. There were some to whom he took an aversion, occasionally with reason, and often with no other reason than that they had displeased him. He

sometimes paid them awkward compliments on their dress or their adventures; it was one way of censuring their manners. There was now and then a talk of his attachment to some women of the court; but these were caprices of the moment, and those to whom he showed most partiality had no influence over him, at least in state affairs. He was really fond of no one but Josephine, notwithstanding the disproportion of years between them. Towards her he was now jealous and severe, now tender and confiding. She answered with her whole heart to the fondness of her husband; she supported his humours patiently, but could never reconcile herself to his infidelities. On the whole, they lived very happily together. He was persuaded that he owed his happiness to her, and she felt in the same manner towards him. She had gone to drink the waters of Plombières in Messidor, in the year X: he grew weary of her absence, and wrote her the most affectionate letters. When she returned, he went part of the way to meet her, loaded her with caresses, and brought her back in triumph to Malmaison.

In courts governed by women, the prevailing tone is to be intriguing, light, and vain. Something worse than all this was to be found in the history of the past. The greater part of those who formed the court of the First Consul not having been early fashioned in a frivolous school of manners, discovered their natural disposition, which was moral and good. Buonaparte wished for a certain decorum and gravity tempered with elegance, politeness, and grace: Madame Buonaparte set an example of all this. It was no longer the custom for men to boast of their excesses, or to hold up their vices to admiration, as models of courtly refinement and of the *savoir vivre*. The Revolution had undoubtedly tended to improve the morals: but should the prejudiced or ill-informed be disposed to dispute this, they cannot deny that at least it had produced a greater deference to public opinion and attention to appearances. The First

Consul more than once carried his solicitude on this point to severity. He had no children of his own, but showed every mark of attention and kindness to those of his wife by her former marriage. They justified his regard by their excellent qualities and their attachment. Eugene Beauharnais was full of honour, faithful, and brave; Hortense was mild, amiable, and affectionate. By uniting her in marriage to his brother Louis, the First Consul thought to reconcile his political views with the happiness of his step-daughter. In the midst of the reveries which floated in his mind respecting the stability and foundation of his dynasty, he had little hope of heirs direct, and this marriage promised to supply them collaterally. Neither Lucien nor Joseph Buonaparte at all relished the match. Hortense became the mother of a boy. Rumours without any foundation, and quite absurd to those who knew anything of the persons, were spread abroad on this occasion. This child was pointed out by public opinion as the presumptive heir to the consular power; but he died a few years after, to the great mortification and chagrin of Buonaparte, who wished to adopt him as his successor. In the course of these pages will be seen his opinions and arguments on the subject of the law proposed respecting adoption; and the extravagance and almost frenzy to which he worked himself up, in endeavouring by a mere *fiat* of the will to place the child of adoption in the same degree of proximity as the child of *the same blood and bone*, will prove to a demonstration to all those who have the least insight into character or human nature, that he was not, as had been grossly pretended, the father of the child by a spurious connexion.

The First Consul could not set up pretensions to be a perfect equestrian, though on horseback he was daring to imprudence. Nor could it be said of him, according to the poet, that he "excelled in guiding a chariot to the goal."\* One day he was resolved to

\* "Il excelle à conduire un char dans la carrière."

display his skill in the park at St. Cloud, by driving a calash four-in-hand, in which were Madame Buonaparte, her daughter, Madame Duroc, Joseph Buonaparte, and the Consul Cambacères. At the gate which separates the garden from the park, he struck against a post, lost his balance, and was thrown off to a considerable distance. He strove to rise, fell down again, and lost his recollection. The horses in the meantime, which had run away with the carriage, were stopped, and the ladies were lifted out almost ready to faint. With some difficulty the First Consul came to himself, and continued the ride, but inside the carriage. He had received a slight contusion on the chin, and the right wrist had been a little hurt. On returning home, he said, "I believe every one ought to keep to his own profession." He had Laplace, Monge, and Berthollet to dine with him. He conversed with them the whole evening, as if nothing had happened. Nevertheless, he owned that he never thought himself so near death as at this moment. Madame Buonaparte continued extremely ill, and said in the course of the evening, "At the instant of his fall, Buonaparte had his eyes turned inward, and I thought he was dead. He has promised never to run the same risk again. He has often been blamed for his extreme carelessness on horseback; he frightens every one who accompanies him. Corvisart has been called in; he did not think it necessary to let blood. The First Consul wishes that this accident should not be talked of."

A like accident is related to have happened to Oliver Cromwell. He had received as a present from a German prince, a set of six horses, remarkable for their beauty and swiftness. Having gone with his secretary, Thurloe, to take a ride in Hyde Park, in a light carriage drawn by these horses, he took it into his head to drive them himself, not thinking it would be more difficult to manage half a dozen horses than to govern three kingdoms. But the horses, spirited and untractable under the hand of their new driver,

grew restive and ran away with the carriage, which was soon overturned. In his fall a pistol, which Cromwell had about him, went off without wounding him. The Protector was taken up, stunned and bruised with his fall, but less hurt than Thurloe. If this is anything more than a mere casual coincidence, it might seem as if usurpers, or those who have seized the reins of government into their own hands, have an ambition to be charioteers, where there is a sense of power, and of difficulty and dexterity in directing it. Legitimate rulers, from Nimrod downwards, have been remarked to have a passion for hunting, where they are carried along by a violent borrowed impulse and seem like the natural lords of the creation.

## CHAPTER XXV.

DIFFERENT POLITICAL PROJECTS AGITATED IN THE  
COUNCIL OF STATE.

Opinions and arguments of Napoleon on the lists of notability; the legion of honour; objections to its institution considered.

WE have hitherto chiefly seen Buonaparte either at the head of armies, or acting in public with the *éclat*, the authority, and sense of responsibility, which his situation implied. A work of great authenticity, candour, and ability, lately published, enables us at present to view him in an intellectual undress, without disguise or parade, with his thoughts rising to his lips as they rose in his mind, with his projects half formed and growing to maturity, and contending with his confidential friends and counsellors in the most perfect freedom and in downright earnest, about the reasons and propriety of their adoption or rejection. Few persons in history, who have acted a conspicuous part in the world, would bear this mental exposure and comparison so well. There is no loss, but rather an increase of the idea of sterling sense and talent; nor is there much abatement of striking effect. It is like a fine portrait after a number of vile caricatures. There is a masterly display of inexhaustible activity, vigour, and subtlety, joined with great singularity, simplicity, and even *naïveté*. There are some touches so dramatic as to lay open the whole secret of his conduct, and to show that his greatness or his weaknesses, his good or evil fortune, were not in his own power, but a consequence of the inbred and invincible bias of his character. He formed in this respect a



species by himself, utterly distinct from modern effeminacy or European civilization. There is an adust fibre, a heat of blood evidently borrowed from the East. He was a Tamerlane or Gengis Khan, dropped not only in the vortex of the Revolution, which was not amiss, but in the centre of Paris, the most unfortunate situation into which a great man could fall.

I shall throw together in this chapter and the following, his opinions and arguments on the lists of notability, the legion of honour, the *concordat*, schools, the colonies, and the law of divorce, which will a little anticipate the order of time ; but will, I hope, decide the reader's judgment of the real dimensions and structure of his mind, and serve to explain and open out his political views and principles. I shall also take this opportunity to make some remarks and enter a protest of my own on these subjects.

The First Consul showed little partiality to the lists of notability, which were brought forward in the council of state (14th Pluviose, year IX.) and which were designed to point out by popular vote 5000 or 6000 individuals, from whom all public officers were to be chosen, and the tribunate and legislative body were to be regularly recruited by the senate. This was one of the complicated and artificial provisions of Sièyes's patchwork constitution. Emmery, one of the members of the council, said that the lists were condemned by public opinion, because they deprived the greater number of citizens of that which was the most flattering result of the French Revolution, their immediate eligibility to all public offices and honours. The First Consul declared that the institution was altogether bad ; it was an absurd and spurious product of *ideology*. " Fifty men, met together in a desperate crisis, have no right to annul the rights of the people. Nevertheless, detestable as the institution is, it is a part of the constitution ; it is our business to execute it ; in that we do our duty and show our good-will." Bu-

naparte was friendly to liberty, except when his own person was concerned. Still he listened to the arguments in favour of this measure, which was finally carried. Roederer, who brought the measure forward, saw in the lists of notability a step towards his favourite projects of hereditary succession and aristocracy. The new nobility was to proceed from the same egg. Mathieu Dumas was against the lists, because he did not want a nobility of the Revolution, but was wholly devoted to the ancient *noblesse*.

**THE LEGION OF HONOUR.**—At the sitting of the council of state of the 14th of Floreal, year X., the First Consul desired Roederer to read aloud the project for the establishment of the legion of honour; and after the reading, he explained the motives for it.

“The actual system of military rewards,” he observed, “is not well regulated. The 87th article of the constitution provides, indeed, national recompences for military men, but without specifying the way. A decree has been passed to authorise the distribution of arms of honour, which implies double pay, and occasions a considerable expense. There are arms of honour with an augmentation, others without any remuneration. It is a system of confusion, one does not know what it is. Besides, it is necessary to give a direction to the spirit of the army, and above all, to sustain it. What actually supports it is the notion among the military that they fill the place of the former nobles. The project in question gives a greater degree of consistency to the system of rewards, it forms a whole; it is a commencement of the organization of the nation.” Mathieu Dumas read a memoir in support of the proposed institution. He objected to the plan, inasmuch as it admitted mere citizens into the legion of honour. He wished it to be composed entirely of the military, in order to maintain this spirit in the nation and in the army. Honour and martial glory had been regularly on the decline since the abolition of the feudal system, which

had given the precedence to the soldier. Such was the idea he developed. He concluded by insisting that no citizen should be admitted into the legion of honour, without at least being able to prove that he had complied with the laws on the conscription.

*The First Consul.*—"These notions might have held good in the time of the feudal system and of chivalry, or when the Gauls were conquered by the Franks. The nation was enslaved; the conquerors alone were free: they were everything, they were so as being soldiers. Then the first quality of a general or of a chief was bodily strength. So Clovis, Charlemagne were the strongest and most active men in their armies: they alone were equal singly to a number of soldiers, to a battalion; that was what ensured them obedience and respect. It was a consequence of the mode of warfare practised at the time. The knights fought hand to hand; force and address decided the victory. But when the military system changed, when disciplined troops, the Macedonian phalanx, large masses succeeded to the fashion of single combat between the knights, it was quite another thing; it was no longer individual strength which determined the fate of battles, but science, masterly *coup-d'œil*, and so on. One may see the proofs of this in what took place at the battles of Agincourt, Crécy, and Poitiers. King John and his knights gave way before the Gascon phalanxes, as the troops of Darius had done before the Macedonian. This is the reason why no other power could stop the victorious march of the Roman legions.

"The alteration then in the military system, and not the abolition of the feudal system, would unavoidably modify the qualifications required in a general. Not to say that the feudal system was abolished by the kings themselves, to shake off the yoke of a sullen and turbulent nobility. They enfranchised the commons, and had battalions raised from among the people. The martial spirit, instead of being confined to some thousands of Franks, extended

to all the Gauls. It was not weakened by this circumstance; on the contrary, it acquired greater strength. It was no longer exclusive, founded solely on individual force and violence, but on social qualities. The discovery of gunpowder had also a prodigious influence on the changes in the military system, and on all the consequences it drew after it. Since that period, what is it that constitutes the superiority of a general? His mental qualities, his *coup-d'œil*, calculations, quickness, his administrative resources, eloquence, not that of the advocate, but that which suits the head of an army, and finally the knowledge of mankind: all this belongs to the civil order. It is not at present a man six feet three inches high who will do the greatest things. If it sufficed in order to be a general to have strength and courage, every soldier might pretend to the command. The general who succeeds in the greatest undertakings is the one who combines the greatest number of the above qualities. It is from his being thought to possess more understanding that the soldiers obey and respect him. It is necessary to hear them talk in the bivouacs: they esteem a leader who knows how to form a right judgment much more than one who merely shows the greatest bravery; not that the common soldier does not value bravery, for he would despise a general who was without it. Murad-Bey was the strongest and most expert of all the Mamelukes, without that he would not have been Bey. When he saw me, he had no conception how I could command my troops; nor did he comprehend it till he understood our system of warfare. The Mamelukes fought like the knights of old, body opposed to body and without any order, which was the reason that we beat them. If we had destroyed the Mamelukes, freed Egypt, and formed battalions of the inhabitants, the martial spirit would not have been annihilated; its force would on the contrary have been rendered more considerable. In all places, brute force yields to moral qualities. The bayonet bows down before

the priest who speaks in the name of Heaven, or before the man who can make good a superiority in knowledge. I have told military men, who had their doubts on this subject, that a military government would never do in France unless the nation had been first brutalised by fifty years of ignorance. All such attempts will fail, and their authors will fall victims to them. It is not as general that I govern, but because the people think that I have some civil qualifications proper to government: if they were not of this opinion, the government could not stand. I knew well what I did when, at the head of the army, I took the title of a member of the Institute: I felt sure of not being mistaken even by the lowest drummer in the army.

"It is wrong to argue from the barbarous ages to the present times. We amount to thirty millions of men connected together by knowledge, interest, commerce, and language. Three or four hundred thousand military are nothing compared with this mass. Besides that the general commands only by his civil qualities, from the time that he is no longer on duty he returns into the civil order. The soldiers themselves are the sons of citizens. The army is a part of the nation. If we consider the military abstractedly from all these relations, we shall soon be convinced that they know no other law but force; that they refer everything to it, that they see only that. The citizen, on the other hand, recognises only the general good. The characteristic of the soldier is to will all despotically; that of the citizen is to submit everything to discussion, to truth, to reason. These have their different prisms, and are often mixed up with error, but still discussion produces light. I have no hesitation then in thinking, that as to the question of precedence, it belongs incontestably to the civil character. If we were to distinguish, however, into military and civil, this would be to establish two orders in the state, while there is but one nation. If honours were conferred only on the

military, this preference would be still worse, for the nation would be no longer anything."

These sentiments, sustained by a force of eloquence and reasoning not at all common, were shared by the great majority of the council composed of civilians, and had an immense weight in the mouth of the chief of the government, of the first general of the army. Dumas felt no temptation to reply. No one took up the question. It seemed as if there was an apprehension of weakening the impression made by this discourse; and the First Consul broke up the sitting in order to leave the impression entire. Nothing had so far been said on the most delicate part of the question, the utility or disadvantages of the institution itself. The subject was renewed in the sitting of the 18th. The opponents of the project did not set their faces against every kind of reward and distinction. The legislative assemblies had at different times decreed them; but the present institution was regarded as *an order*, and this was held to be contrary to the spirit of equality, the most essential characteristic of the French Republic. An allusion to the Greeks and Romans also escaped some of the speakers.

Berlier said: "The proposed order leads to aristocracy; crosses and ribbons are the child's playthings of monarchy. I shall not appeal to the example of the Romans; there existed among them patricians and plebeians. This had nothing to do with a system of honorary rewards. It was a political institution, a division of classes which might have its advantages as well as inconveniences. The citizens were classed according to their birth, and not with reference to their services. Honours and national recompences were transient distinctions, made no change in the rank of the individual, and did not form a separate class of those who had entitled themselves to them. For the rest, we have abolished ranks, and have no wish to restore them. The magistracies and public employments ought in a republic to be the highest rewards of services, of

talents, and of virtue." Berlier then refuted the opinion of Dumas.

The First Consul, in reply to Berlier and more particularly to those who had cited the ancients as models, said :—

"They are always talking to us of the Romans ; it is not a little strange that, in order to set aside social distinctions, we should be referred to the example of a people among whom they existed in the most marked manner. Is this showing an acquaintance with history ? The Romans had patricians, knights, citizens, and slaves. They had, moreover, for each class divers costumes and different manners. They decreed as recompences all sorts of distinctions ; names which recalled the particular service, mural crowns, public triumphs. They employed even the sanction of superstition. Take away the religion of Rome, and you leave nothing standing. When this noble band of patricians lost its influence, Rome was torn in pieces ; the people were the vilest rabble. You then saw the fury of Marius, the proscriptions of Sylla, and afterwards the Emperors. In like manner, they always cite Brutus as the enemy of tyrants. Be it so ; but in fact Brutus was no better than an aristocrat : he killed Cæsar for no other reason than because Cæsar wanted to diminish the authority of the senate, in order to increase that of the people. Such is the manner in which ignorance or party spirit quotes history.

"I defy any one to point out a republic, ancient or modern, in which there is no distinction of ranks.\* They call all that *child's rattles* : be it so ; it is with children's rattles that men are led. I would not say that in a tribune ; but in a council of wise men and statesmen one ought to speak out. I do not believe that the French people love *liberty* and *equality*. The French character has not been changed by ten years of revolution ; they are still what their ancestors

\* Is not America an instance ? Was not France ?

the Gauls were, vain and light. They are susceptible but of one sentiment, *honour*; it is right, then, to afford nourishment to this sentiment, and to allow of distinctions. Observe how the people bow before the decorations of foreigners; the latter have been surprised themselves at the effect, and take care never to appear without them.

"Voltaire calls the common soldiers so many *Alexanders at five sous a day*. He was right; it is just so. Do you imagine you can make men fight by reasoning? Never. It is only fit for the student in his closet. You must bribe the soldier with glory, distinction, rewards. The armies of the Republic have done wonders, because they were composed of the sons of peasants and of substantial farmers, and not of the mere rabble; because the officers had taken the situations of those of the ancient *régime*, but also through a sentiment of honour. It was on the same principle that the armies of Louis XIV. performed such great things.\* People may, if they please, call the project *an order*; names do not alter the nature of things." [Yet what is the thing itself but a *name*?] "But to come to the point; during ten years there has been a talk of institutions: what has been done? Nothing. The time was not arrived. It was thought a happy expedient to assemble the people in the churches, there to shiver with cold in hearing the laws recited, in perusing and studying their contents. It is not a very amusing employment even for those whose business it is to execute them; how then could the people be expected to take an interest in such an occupation? I know well enough that if we place ourselves in the skull-cap that encloses the ten years of the Revolution, we shall in that point of view find that the plan is good for nothing; but if we place

\* What a desire there seems to be here and everywhere to neutralise the supposed influence of the Revolution, and to separate liberty from glory as its natural offspring! In the addresses to the army of Italy, he said, "None but the Republican soldiers can do all this!"



ourselves after the Revolution, and admit the actual necessity we are under of organising the nation, we shall think differently. All has been overturned ; we want at present to build up again. There is a government with certain powers ; as to all the rest of the nation, what is it but grains of sand ? We have in the midst of us\* the remains of the old privileged classes, connected by principles and interests, and knowing well what it is they want. I can count our enemies. But as to ourselves, we are scattered, without system, without union, without contact. As long as I remain I can answer for the Republic ; but we must provide for the future. Do you suppose that the Republic is definitively established ? It would be a gross mistake. We have it in our power to achieve this object, but we have not yet done it, nor shall we ever succeed in it, if we do not, as a foundation, cast some blocks of granite on the soil of France. Do you suppose we can reckon upon the people ? They cry indifferently, *Vive le Roi, Vive la Ligue !* It is then necessary to give them a direction, and to have instruments for that purpose. In the war of La Vendée, I have seen forty men govern a department ; it is of this system that we ought to avail ourselves. In fine, it is agreed that we have need of some kind of institutions : if this is not approved of, let some other be proposed. I do not pretend that it alone will save the state, but it will do its part."

The Second Consul (Cambacères) defended the project, and applied himself principally to show that the constitution did not disallow of honorary distinctions. Portalis followed on the same side, and developed the principles laid down by J. J. Rousseau on the influence and importance of signs. The plan was discussed in another sitting of the council, at which the First Consul was not present. He presided over that of the 24th of the month. He led the discussion towards the drawing up and matters of detail, as if the basis had been adopted ; he did not put it to the vote, and all at once proposed the ques-

\* Was it not owing to the French Consul that it was so ?

tion whether it would be proper to send it to the legislative body, considering the short time the session had to last.

*Thibaudeau*.—"It is a law of great importance and a system diametrically opposed to the principles professed during the Revolution. The abolition of the distinctions of rank did not take place in those disastrous times which reflect so much discredit even on the best things. The decree was passed by the Constituent Assembly, at one of the epochs the most honourable to the Revolution. The nation, it is true, is profoundly imbued with the sentiment of *honour*; but it is this very sentiment that renders the idea of *equality* above all things dear to it. It was these two motives, combined with the love of liberty, of independence, and of country, that led the first armies of the Republic to victory. I am not convinced that with the Legion of Honour they would have performed greater things. Considered as a guarantee for the Revolution, the plan appears to me to militate against its object; and as an intermediate body, to flow from a principle inapplicable to representative government. I am afraid lest the fondness for ribbons should weaken the sentiments of duty and even of honour, instead of expanding and strengthening them. I respect the reasons which have been developed in the course of the discussion in favour of the project; they are imposing; but I own I still entertain some doubts. It is desirable that so important an institution should not be established without the assent, well pronounced and understood, of the principal bodies of the state and of the nation. The session of the legislative body will end in two or three days: is it right, then, to refer to it just now the project of a law which requires the most serious reflection? I think not. I foresee that it will meet with a strong opposition. It seems to me advisable to adjourn the question."

Portalis, Dumas, Roederer opposed the adjournment: the First Consul then put it to the vote; it

was lost by fourteen voices against ten. Lacuée, Emmery, Berlier, Berenger, Thibaudeau, Jolivet, Defermon, Cretet, and Réal voted for the adjournment because they were against the project. It was carried up on the 25th to the legislative body. Roederer prefaced it with a brief recapitulation of the objects. He said, "It is an institution intended in aid of all the laws of the Republic, and which should serve to consolidate the Revolution. It confers on military as well as civil services the reward of patriotism which they have so well merited. It blends them in the same glory, as the nation does not distinguish them in its gratitude. By a common distinction it unites men already united by honourable recollections; it opens a friendly intercourse between those who are already disposed to esteem one another. It places under the shelter of their responsibility and their oaths the laws in favour of equality, liberty, and property. It effaces aristocratic distinctions which placed hereditary glory before that which was acquired, and the descendants of great men before the great men themselves. It is a moral distinction which adds force and activity to that lever of honour which so powerfully impels the French nation. It is a politic institution which establishes in the community intermediate bodies, through which the acts of power are laid before public opinion with fidelity and candour, and through which public opinion can reascend to instruct power. It is a military institution which will allure into the army that portion of the youth of the country, which otherwise it would perhaps be difficult to rouse from the indolence which is the companion of prosperous circumstances. Finally, it is the creation of a new species of money of a very different value from that which issues from the public mint; a money of which the standard is unimpeachable and the mine inexhaustible, since it has its source in the national honour; a money which can alone become the equivalent of actions regarded as superior to all other recompence."

Lucien Buonaparte, as reporter to the commission of the Tribunal, proposed the adoption of the new law. Savoye-Rollin combated it in a discourse full of sound principles and facts, and which produced a strong sensation. Chauvelin followed up the system of attack by a declaration equally well reasoned. These were the principal objections: that the Legion of Honour contains in itself all the elements on which hereditary nobility has been founded in all ages; that it implies exclusive qualifications, powers, honours, titles, and fixed revenue; that nobility has rarely commenced with so many advantages; that it is not safe to rely on the progress of knowledge and the difference of the times, the human heart being always the same; that the same opportunities make men fall into the same errors, and indulge in the same propensities; that the Legion of Honour will forthwith revive prejudices but half extinguished, and received in all the rest of Europe, and that these prejudices will serve to fortify the influence of the military and aristocratical ideas which have always emanated from it, and will introduce a spirit of classes instead of the spirit of the public good; that under pretence of effacing the old nobility, the Legion of Honour will originate a new one, and strongly reinforce the old; that as an intermediate body, it is at best a superfluity, intermediate bodies being of some benefit in despotic states, but that under a representative government, and among a people sufficiently happy to enjoy a public discussion of its laws and measures, the true and only intermediate bodies between the people and the government are the constituted authorities; in a word, that the proposed institution is contrary to the spirit and principles of the Republic, and to the letter of the constitution.

Freville defended the project, and Lucien Buonaparte replied to his antagonists with a great deal of youthful presumption. Confident in the ties which attached him to the First Consul, he attributed criminal intentions to those who differed with him, charged

them with designs against the government, spoke of the indignation which he felt, and discharged a part of his spleen on the nation itself, which he attempted to degrade by the epithet *pitiable*. The indiscretion of the speaker raised up a great number of enemies to the project. It was carried only by a majority of 56 voices against 38.

The subject was brought forward in the legislative body ; but there it met with opposition. The three government orators, and the three orators of the tribune, charged solely to defend the project, accumulated every possible argument and excuse in its favour. The discussion was terminated by an allusion made by Dumas to a passage of the Roman history relative to Marcus Claudius Marcellus, who was called the *Sword of Rome*. "Well then," exclaimed the orator, "*our* Marcellus, *our* Consul, on whom the people are at this moment about to confer the magistracy for life, he who protected the arts and sciences in the midst of the horrors of war, who under the wings of victory made them rear their heads in Egypt, in their first cradle, whence the Greeks and Archimedes borrowed them, in fine our Sword of France proposes it to you, the high-priests of the law, to erect a double temple to honour and to virtue." The said pontiffs voted on the question ; and in spite of all that eloquence could suggest to gain their suffrages, the Legion of Honour was sanctioned only by 166 voices against 110. A triumph so sharply contested and hardly extorted from two bodies which had just undergone a purification, did not greatly flatter the First Consul. No measure of the Consulate met with a warmer opposition. One of the council said to him, "You see that those among the councillors of state who voted for the adjournment had some reason. So strong an opposition is always a thing to be avoided." He replied, "True ; it would have been better to have waited. Sufficient time was not given. The matter was not so urgent. Besides, the orators who defended the measure did not give good reasons for it."

The grand objection that might be made to the institution of the Legion of Honour, considered not as a mere pretext and stepping-stone to the re-establishment of hereditary nobility, which merges "acquired glory in that which is borrowed," and all talent and virtue in birth and rank, but as a kind of rival to this and an order of personal merit, is that there can be no order of personal merit. 1. Titles and external marks of distinction should be confined to represent external advantages only: there they have an appropriate meaning and effect (whether good or bad, is another question). A coronet on a coach speaks a plain and intelligible language; for every one knows by this that the ancestors of the person who owns it were persons of rank and distinction as much as the carriage itself shows that he is rich. But there can be no outward and visible sign of an inward and visible grace; for the question of real desert is one which is always left reserved in the human breast, and a bit of red ribbon in the button-hole does not alter our opinion in this respect. We may bow down to the advantages actually possessed by others, as we may wish that we ourselves had them; but no one willingly acknowledges a superiority in personal worth over himself or would give up his personal identity, however gladly he might change places with another. Again, a man may wear a medal to imply that he was in a certain battle, or a particular dress to show he belongs to a certain society or profession—that is specific and positive; but no man can wear a badge which says, "I am a better man than you who do not wear it;" for this is a thing that does not properly admit of proof, and which no one grants as a voluntary concession. As a mere assumption on the part of the individual, it is an impertinence; as a licence from government, it implies a degree of servility and a sense of inferiority in others which is contrary to the principles of equality and reason. Instead of thinking more of the individuals who thus court distinction without anything to warrant it (unlike outward ex-

pense and magnificence, which carry their credentials along with them and impose on the imagination, if not on the understanding) you think less of them; and virtue and merit are in the end reduced to a piece of red ribbon, which is made their inadequate symbol. If a man of merit looks meanly in the street, you cannot say to the passengers, "Respect this man;" they will rather learn to despise personal merit which is not corroborated by personal appearance. It is a translation from one language to another; and all things suffer by translation. 2. It is true, the language of signs, according to Rousseau, is a powerful one; but it has more or less influence according to times and circumstances, and the insisting upon it in preference is a recurrence to the ages of barbarism. The natural tendency of the human mind is (as already observed) from the concrete to the abstract. Who would now resort to the Egyptian hieroglyphics, though these might have had their advantages? The streets of Paris and London were at one time stuffed with signs over every shop door, which are now taken down by common consent. They were useful and even necessary when scarcely any one could read, and must have afforded great delight and amusement to the imagination, before the progress of the fine arts had improved and directed the public taste. So a higher and more abstracted standard of morals and of personal merit, connected with the progress of knowledge and inquiry, supersedes the use and value of personal badges, and of a more gross and material language. A nobleman or gentleman was right in wearing a sword and an embroidered dress when, from the coarseness of manners, he was liable to be jostled or knocked down without it; but the police has removed the danger of this, and he now aims at distinction by other means than the mere admiration which his own finery or the rich livery of his footmen might excite. As a change has taken place in the art of war, by which skill

and science have prevailed over brute force, and the mind over the body, so a proportionable change has taken place in the intercourse of peace, by which conversation and behaviour are more sought after than dress and equipage. To revert to the old-fashioned tinsel and Gothic forms is to tread back our steps instead of advancing with the spirit of the age. There is no occasion to affect distinction by slovenliness and indecency as in the times of *sansculottism*; but neither will external frippery and an appeal to the senses ever regain their influence in the eyes of others, unless they were as formerly the sole proofs of intelligence or power, and were seconded as formerly by the fear and ignorance of the multitude. 3 It is drawing a line where none can properly be drawn. Buonaparte was blamed for giving the cross of the Legion of Honour to Crescentini the singer. But was the exclusion to extend to musical composers as well as singers, to poets as well as players? There could be no rule laid down in the case. What depends on opinion must be left to opinion, the only scale fine enough to weigh the fluctuating and evanescent pretensions to public favour. It is true, the theatrical profession labours under an unjust stigma in France, having of old incurred the *odium theologicum*: and Buonaparte wished to remove this stigma, and to give it a place in public estimation corresponding to that which it holds in public admiration. There was an evident and ill-natured discordancy which he wished to do away with. But he could not do it. The Legion of Honour would only have got laughed at if he had persisted in the attempt: there is no forcing opinion. Honour can only be the echo of opinion; or the utmost that it can do is to lend its stamp to fugitive esteem, to the dictates of prejudice, or the accidents of fortune, which instead of being confirmed and sanctioned by authority, ought to be corrected and effaced by time and reason. The whole is false mathematics, an attempt to square the circle. Buona-



parte wished, however, to model this institution on as broad and liberal a scale as possible; and what he says on the subject in another place shows equal sense and feeling.

“ No comedian ever received the decoration of the Legion of Honour. Are Gretry, Paesello, Mehul, and Le Sueur, our most celebrated composers, to be compared to singers? Must the proscription be extended to David, Gros, Vernet, Renaud, and Robert Lefebvre, our most eminent painters; and even to Lagrange, La Place, Berthollet, Monge, Vauquelin, Chaptal, Guyton de Morveau, Jouy, Baour Lormian, Fontanes, Sismondi, and Guinguené? The French soldier must entertain sentiments highly unworthy of him, before a decoration worn by such men can on that account lose any part of its value in his eyes. If the Legion of Honour were not the recompence of civil as well as military services, it would cease to be the Legion of Honour. It would be a strange piece of presumption indeed in the military to pretend that honours should be paid to them only. Soldiers who knew not how to read or write were proud of wearing, in recompence for the blood they had shed, the same decoration as was given to distinguished talents in civil life; and, on the other hand, the latter attached a greater value to this reward of their labours, because it was the reward of the brave. But then Crescentini? It is true that in a moment of enthusiasm, just after hearing the fine scenes of ‘Romeo and Juliet,’ the Emperor gave him the cross of the Iron Crown. Crescentini, however, was of good birth; he belonged to the worthy citizens of Bologna, *a city so dear to Napoleon’s heart*. He thought it would please the Italians, but was mistaken; ridicule attacked the transaction: had it been approved by public opinion, he would have given the cross of the Legion of Honour to Talma, St. Prix, Fleury, Grandmenil, Lais, Gardel, and Elleviou: he refrained from doing so out of consideration for the weakness and prejudices of the

age, and he was in the wrong. The Legion of Honour was the reversion of every one who was an honour to his country, stood at the head of his profession, and contributed to the national prosperity and glory. Some officers were dissatisfied, because the decoration of the Legion of Honour was alike for officers and soldiers. But if ever it cease to be the recompence of the lowest class of the military, and a medal be instituted through aristocratical feelings to reward the mere soldier, or if ever the civil order be deprived of it, it will cease to be the Legion of Honour."

## CHAPTER XXVI.

## COLONIES—ADOPTION, ETC.

Project for establishing a board of agriculture in the French West India colonies ; opinion of the First Consul ; remarks ; arguments on the law of adoption ; remarks.

THE council of state had to discuss a project for establishing a board of agriculture in the West India colonies. Truguet opposed the plan as dangerous. "It is the colonists," he observed, "who have occasioned all the trouble in the colonies : it is necessary to govern them with severity and vigour. Cultivation will gain nothing by these boards, but they will harass the agents of government."

*The First Consul.*—"Every establishment under a feeble government is liable to become dangerous ; but it is to be recollected that the colonists are French : they have the same character and sense of their rights ; they cannot be treated as slaves. It would be necessary for that purpose to deprive them of the privilege of speaking, thinking, and writing. They have no representatives in the legislature ; the constitution with just reason disallows it : at least, then, they ought to have some means of appealing to the government, of making known their wants, and of stating their grievances. If a plan can be pointed out, which gives less importance to the colonists, I am willing to adopt it ; but I do not see how it is possible to contrive one with less influence, and that is perhaps its fault. Doubtless, it is proper to govern the colonies with energy ; but there is no energy without justice. To this end it is indispensable that the government

should be informed of everything, and that it should hear the parties concerned ; for it is not sufficient to be just, merely to do good ; it is still farther necessary that the governed should be convinced of this, and they cannot be so unless they have the means of making themselves heard. Even were the council of state composed of angels or of gods, who could see with the first glance of the eye what was best to be done, it would signify nothing unless the colonists had the conviction of having had their statements duly attended to.\* Strength is also founded on opinion. It is principally in this point of view that the proposed establishment is necessary. There is at present no medium of communication between France and her colonies : the most absurd reports are circulated there ; the true principles of the government, so far from being properly understood, are burlesqued in every account of them. This is because those of the colonists who are in Paris are forced to collect their information in antechambers, or from the enemies of the government, or in society which has no connexion with it. If, on the contrary, there were established here, under the eye of the government, a sort of colonial association, it would learn the truth, would repeat it, and write word of it home. It is then a channel of information that we want to open with them. The citizen Serres has committed outrages, unheard-of oppressions at Senegal ; some of those banished there have revolted against him. I shall have them tried, because they ought to know that their first duty is obedience to the authority of the mother-country ; but I shall have him tried also, for it was his to make it respected. If there had been here a deputy from Senegal, or a body of commissioners, this man would have been more on his guard, and would have conducted himself better. It is said, '*Choose your agents better :*' but the citizen Serres enjoyed a good reputation before this ; it was power that turned his head. Besides, it is not

\* A finer or more liberal definition of justice, or of what governments owe to the people, surely never was given.

simply with a view to keep a check on the agents of government that the plan is good ; it is also of use to defend them from calumny. A thousand stories have been told of this poor General Dugua ; he had, they said, encouraged the negroes to insurrection : there is not a person who has not heard the most violent accusations against him. Now, if there was any charge against him, it was that of having treated them with too much harshness. In spite of all I could do to put a stop to the calumny, it has not been the less eagerly circulated against an unfortunate man, who devoted himself to destruction by this means. An agent of government, urged by necessity, makes some relaxations in the laws of the customs, and suffers foreign flour to be introduced into the colonies ; instantly he is denounced by the inhabitants of Nantes and Bordeaux as a corrupt officer ; a man sold to the views of the enemy, and yet it is necessity and the welfare of the colony that have determined him to act in the manner he has done. Do you imagine in such a case, that if there were deputies from the colonies near at hand, they would not be eager to point out the truth and to defend the men who had rendered an important service to their country ? The colonists and the merchants have interests always opposed to each other. When it is in agitation to establish a certain tax on the produce of the colonies, all the boards of commerce send in their memorials, and no one watches to defend the interest of the colonies. The law arrives there armed with all its rigour, without any one's being at the pains to explain the motives to the colonists, or to give them an assurance that every circumstance has been duly weighed. I am aware that we keep the colonies for the sake of commerce, for the advantage of the mother country ; but at the same time, the colonists themselves are Frenchmen, are brothers ; they contribute to the support of the state, they have interests of their own to defend, and the least we can do for them is to allow them this imperfect means of

letting us know their sentiments as to what those interests are."

*Truguet.*—"It would, at any rate, be best to postpone the plan; the moment is unfavourable."

The First Consul objected to the adjournment, and added: "People suppose that the colonists are on the side of the English; but I can say that at Martinique there are the best disposed citizens. The partisans of the English are well known; they are far from numerous. So when they sent M. Dubuc here, they wrote to inform me that he was a friend of the English. The agents of the government have been received with the greatest enthusiasm by the inhabitants."

*Truguet.*—"Not by the greater number."

*The First Consul (growing warm).*—"See how things are misrepresented! There are persons who are determined to find only partisans of the English in the colonies, in order that they may have a pretext to oppress them. Well, M. Truguet, if you had come into Egypt to preach up the freedom of the negroes or Arabs, we should have hung you up at the mast-head. It has been so contrived, that all the whites should be delivered over to the ferocity of the blacks, and yet it is thought strange that they should be dissatisfied. Well, then, had I been at Martinique, I should also have been on the side of the English, because above all things it is necessary to save one's life. I am for the whites, because I am white; I have no other reason, yet that is reason good enough. How was it possible to grant liberty to the Africans, to men without any kind of civilization, who did not even know what a colony meant, or that there was such a place as France! It is quite evident, that those who proposed the emancipation of the blacks must wish for the slavery of the whites; but, after all, do you suppose that if the majority of the convention had seen what they were doing, and been acquainted with the colonies, they would have persisted in granting freedom to the negroes? Doubtless not; but few

persons were in a situation to foresee the consequences at the time, and a sentiment of humanity always appeals powerfully to the imagination. But at present, for any one to persist in these principles, is to show a want of good faith ; it is mere pride and hypocrisy. Without going so far, would you have consented, would we have suffered, that the French should have been brought in subjection to the Italians, to the Piedmontese ? We might have been well treated ; they might have made of us what the blacks have made of the whites. We have been obliged, on the contrary, to take strong measures of precaution, and to keep them in a state of dependence ; and even had it been necessary to let all Italy perish or sacrifice two soldiers in my army, I would have let all Italy perish ; because before all things, I am of my army and for my army. To this day even it is necessary to have an eye on that country ; nevertheless, they are whites like us, a civilized people, and our neighbours."

Perhaps, there is not anywhere on record, and particularly coming out of the person's own mouth, a passage which paints so powerfully, with such nakedness and force, not merely the character but the inmost soul and extremity of purpose in an individual, as the one just given. It would be as much in vain to reason with a man whose mind is devoured and burnt up with this unquenchable zeal of partizanship, as to insist that a person is not to writhe with pain who has a living coal of fire applied to his breast. We see a soul of fire, without water or clay, that nothing could tame, could soften, or deter. It is not a question of degree, but a total separation in principle and an antipathy in nature to the ordinary and cherished weaknesses of human nature ; so that no extreme case or disproportion in the objects could make any difference on a mind that had a capacity but for one class and modification of feeling. In this one passage he has given a clue (radiant with light) to all his actions, to all his greatness and little-

ness, his elevation and his fall, without resorting to studied policy, to accident, or the advice of friends. Buonaparte need not talk of Arabs or uncivilised nations ; he is himself one of them. No wild Indian could brood over in his hut or make a triumphant boast at the stake of a more utter abnegation of all the mawkishness of general benevolence ; nor snap with less ceremony or firmer nerves all the ties but those which bind him to his tribe and link him in a chain of sordid interest with others with whom he is knit in a common cause, and who are ready to stand by him in like manner. No son of the Desert, whose feelings have been burnt into him by a scorching sun, who is hardened against compunction by the extremity of want, who recognises only in the stranger or in his fellow-man a deadly foe, whose existence is at war with his own and that of all belonging to him, could express a more determined disbelief in and contempt for all the decencies, charities, and professed courtesies of general philanthropy as mere names and shadows. The tendency of civilization and intellectual intercourse has been to extend the circle of sympathy with the circle of knowledge, to burst the barriers of tribe, nation, and colour, and to extort the confession that wherever there was a kindred feeling, there was a claim to pity, to justice, and humanity. Thus "we see a softness coming over the heart, and the iron scales of ambition that fenced and guarded it melt and drop off." "A negro has a soul, an' please your honour?" said the corporal, doubtingly. "I am no great casuist, Trim," replied my uncle Toby, "but I suppose that God Almighty would not leave him without one, any more than thee or me." This is one of those glancing strokes of the pen which first served to throw a golden streak of light over this dark subject. If pleasure and pain, good and evil were black and white, then justice and injustice, right and wrong, might depend on this distinction. But old Fuller's quaint rhetoric contains a better moral when he calls the negroes "the images of God carved in ebony." The hand



does not feel pain the less because it is black. Why then should it feel it the more because it is black, which does not alter the essence of the question? But it is not like mine, which is white! By what law of nature is it bound to be like it, except to the ignorant and prejudiced; who, knowing of no other colour, could not believe the existence of any other; and wondering to find that such people existed, and struck with the difference, required two hundred years more to look upon them as human beings? If our progress in this respect is slow, difficult, and imperfect, that is no reason why, by a sudden revulsion, we should undo all that has been done, and undermine the very foundation and principles by which any future progress can be made. This is indeed shutting our eyes and leaping into the dark gulf of wilfulness and barbarism. How far the negroes might be humanely treated and made tolerably comfortable, in contradiction to the principles by which they are kept in slavery, I shall not dispute; but I am sure that they must be as ill-treated as possible under the sway of that hard code, which strips them of all title to charity because they are black. Why is it assumed that the negroes are incapable of civilization? They are capable of being taught to wait at table, to ride behind a coach, to cook, to play on the fiddle; why then are they not capable of being taught to work out of doors as common labourers? There is no reason given. If it is determined to keep them slaves by force, then they have but one way to become free, that is, by exterminating their masters. Nothing shall persuade me that a slave is not at least a more respectable character than a slave-driver. Why should the French keep the Italians in subjection? Why lay down this alternative as necessary? It is the way to be subjected yourself. True patriotism warrants no conclusion contrary to liberty or humanity. What were the French to Napoleon? France was his adopted country. No one can feel a natural or blind attachment to thirty millions of people. France,

England is a mere name, a geographical or political denomination, to which we are bound only by moral and rational ties, as a part of the great society of mankind, whose welfare, whose liberty, whose existence we are sworn to defend against the unjust aggressions or encroachments of every other part, but not to sacrifice the whole to it. Why should Buonaparte put the question of sacrificing the lives of two of his soldiers, or letting all Italy perish? This is an extreme case indeed, but it shows the extremity of will and character in the speaker, and is so far invaluable. If all Italy could not weigh down two lives, each Italian life must be worth nothing, a mere cipher, or it would mount up in such a sum. Adam Smith has observed, with the spirit and candour of a philosopher, that perhaps a pain in the little finger would vex a person more than the hearing of the death of a million of men in China by famine or otherwise, and that this is mere infirmity; but that if it were proposed to any one having it in his power whether he should feel a slight pain in his finger, or a million of men should perish of hunger, a man would be a villain who should prefer the latter. Buonaparte seemed to think that the dictates of his will were to outweigh those of common sense and feeling; and that he was to act with rigid stoicism on the bare calculations of self-interest, as if they had been the severe deductions of reason and philosophy.

There is the same extraordinary tenacity of purpose and incorrigible determination to subject the reason and nature of things to mere arbitrary will, discernible in the discussions which occurred in the council of state relative to the law of adoption. We can hardly have a complete understanding of Buonaparte's character without turning to them; and they will be useful in more than one point of view.

*The First Consul.* "The citizen Tronchet, in rejecting the principle of *adoption*, has cited the Romans; yet it took place among them in their Comitia, in presence of the whole people. The

citizen Portalis has also said that wills were made before the Roman people. The reason of which is, that these acts were derogatory to the rights of families and the order of succession. The objection drawn from our constitution is not well founded. Whatever is not expressly prohibited by it is permitted. Adoption is neither a civil contract nor a judicial act. What is it then? An imitation by which society strives to ape nature. It is a kind of new sacrament ; for I cannot find in the language any word that exactly defines its nature. The child of the blood and of the bone of one passes (so to speak) by the volition of the community into the blood and the bones of another. It is the loftiest act that can be imagined. It inspires the sentiments of a son into him who had them not, and reciprocally teaches those of a father. Whence then ought this act to proceed ? From on high, like the thunderbolt. You are not the son of such a one, says the legislative body ; nevertheless, you shall have the same sentiments as if you were. One cannot then raise one's-self too high for such an operation. It is feared that in this manner the use of adoption should be too much limited ; but we thereby honour it. Neither is it necessary that the legislature should enter into the details of each case ; but as a high-priest, it comes forward to impart the sacred character. Suppose disputes to arise between the natural son and the son by adoption. The last will reply : It is the same authority which has established the marriage from which you proceed ; it is the law itself which has made me your brother. An objection has been started to the revocability of adoption ; but I would not have it revocable. Divorce is cited as a parallel case. How can any one compare that which dissolves with that which creates ? When the state has pronounced the adoption to have taken place, surely it is not possible to think of permitting it to be recalled. It would be different if it originally emanated from a court of justice. It would be then not more than a sentence passed. When the father

wished to remonstrate with the adopted son, the latter might say: You are not my father! The adopted might also abuse the secrets of the affairs or of the feelings of the adopter. No, it is not to be admitted."

Tronchet maintained the opinion of the First Consul; Roederer combated it. "It is," said he, "more especially for the poorer classes that adoption is of use; for the labourer, for instance, who adopts the infant that the administration of the hospitals has entrusted to his care. The First Consul aims at giving the institution too elevated a character. The labouring man will not feel this, but on the contrary will be deterred by it."

*The First Consul.* "The imagination must be powerfully affected. If there are differences between the natural and the adoptive father, if embarked in the same boat, they are threatened with imminent danger, the son ought to save his adoptive father. There is nothing but the will of the sovereign that can impress this sentiment. The legislative body must not pronounce in this case as it does in questions of property, of imposts, but as the high-priests of morality and the head of a sacred institution. The vice of our modern legislators is to have nothing that speaks to the imagination. It is not possible to govern man except by it; without imagination he is no better than a brute beast. If the priests were to establish adoption, they would make an imposing ceremony of it. It is a mistake to govern men like machines. The whole society must interfere here. Your system leads to the revocability of adoption.

*The Minister of Justice.* "The legislative body will only sanction; for the consent of the parties is sufficient for the contract."

*The First Consul.* "There is no contract with a minor. A contract implies only geometrical obligations, it has nothing to do with sentiment. Insert the word *heir* in your law, and so let the question rest. *Heir* carries along with it none but geometrical ideas;

adoption, on the contrary, involves the ideas of institutions, of morality, and sentiment. Analysis leads to results the most false and vicious. It is not for five sous a day, for a paltry distinction, that men go to be killed; it is by speaking to the soul that the will is electrified. It is not the notary who will produce this effect for the twelve francs that we pay him. The council do not treat the question properly, they make it an affair of geometry; they view it as framers of the law, and not as statesmen. The imagination should consider adoption as a resource amidst the misfortunes of life. I put the question to the reporter, what difference is there between the heir and the adoptive child?"

*Berlier.* "In order to reply to this question, one must first settle the nature and effects of the kind of adoption which it is proposed to establish, otherwise the means of comparison are wanting; but according to my ideas, the legal heir, or heir by blood, is to the adopted one what the reality is to the fiction, saving the modifications to be introduced into their respective rights and duties."

*The First Consul.* "Should the real father of the adopted become rich, then the latter would abandon his adoptive father. He ought to be allied to him for ever, otherwise he is no more than the heir. What holds the place of the Deity on the earth? The legislature. Who is the son of his father? No one knows for certain. It is the will of the legislature which decides. The adopted son ought to be like that of the flesh and bone. If there is the smallest difference admitted you are wide of your object, or I understand nothing of the matter."

Anything more strikingly characteristic than this is not to be found recorded in the pages of history or fiction. No dramatic author, with all the licence of his art, with all the desire to produce effect, and all the genius and knowledge of nature to do so, ever worked up an *ideal* character to a pitch of greater extravagance and at the same time more consistent

regularity than this. Buonaparte, in default of natural issue of his own, wished to adopt one of his brother's children as his own, and in establishing a law to make them equal, exercises a power of volition that overturns every obstacle that stands in its way. The wishing the adopted child to stand in as near a relation to the parent as the natural, and his reasonings to make it appear that this is possible, amount to the acuteness and perversity of frenzy. To effect a favourite purpose he clothes law with omnipotence, makes it able to create what nature has refused to do, and to reconcile a contradiction in terms. It would be as rational to pass a law to make the barren breed, or to transform a marble statue into a living being, and to expect it to feel towards you the sentiments of filial piety, or to inspire a corresponding affection towards it, as to impress this character by mere force of words on a being that has it not by natural relation. It is true, law makes a difference in natural children, that is, requires other moral and artificial conditions before it adds its highest sanction; but to suppose that after all these conditions have been complied with, it can add the same sanction in a case where the most essential of all is wanting, is bad reasoning in every respect. Yet Buonaparte talks loudly of sentiment, as if sentiment were the creature of arbitrary institutions. The law is founded on nature, and does not create it. This attempt is like trying to unite hard substances without cement, by merely pressing them violently together: as long as the pressure continues they remain in contact, but as soon as it is taken away they fall asunder. I will venture to say that Buonaparte would not have argued in this manner, nor have suffered any one else to do so, after the birth of the King of Rome. Yet he is as absolute in his tone as any theological bigot, who has undertaken to impose contradictions in terms as articles of faith on mankind, in defiance of their reason and senses. There is one other remark to be made on this extract; it proves with the clearness of

daylight, that the scandalous stories respecting the birth of the adopted child whom he was so anxious to place on a level with one of the blood and bone, are utterly unfounded; for the rage and impatience here manifested to convert a legal fiction into a natural reality, would indeed have been absurd and wholly unaccountable, had the intended child and heir of his adoption been really and truly his own son.

As a contrast to these instances of excessive perversity of self-will, I will here add another, which shows equal acuteness with true liberality and considerateness of feeling. In speaking of sending back children from the public schools after making trial of their abilities for a certain time, Buonaparte says, "It is a very bad idea. One has no right thus to fix a stain on the honour of a child; for it is one that would stick by him all his life. A great many children appear stupid at twelve or fourteen years of age, while others are very forward at ten. One ought never to despair of a child till he has arrived at the age of puberty; it is then alone that he attains the development of all his faculties, and that a judgment can be formed of him. Till then, no encouragement should be spared." This single observation would do honour to any one who had spent his life in studying the character of children and the progressive unfolding of the faculties. Buonaparte was seldom wrong, except when he was determined not to be right. His understanding was strong, but his will was still stronger.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

## FIRST SUGGESTION OF THE CONCORDAT.

Napoleon in its favour; arguments and remarks.

BUONAPARTE'S object almost from the first appears to have been to consolidate the Revolution, by softening its features and mixing up its principles with others which had been longer and more widely established, thus to reconcile old with new France, the philosophers and the priests, and the Republic with the rest of Europe. This was an attempt to make the lamb lie down with the lion, and the only wonder is that it succeeded so far as it did, which it could not have done but for the *éclat* of his name, the dread of his power, and the extent of his abilities and resources. It was by means of the Concordat that he meant to heal the breaches in religious opinion, and the following seems to be the best account of the train of his feelings and reasonings on this subject.

It had been known for several months that Buonaparte was carrying on a negotiation with the court of Rome. The prelate Spina, Cardinal Gonsalvi, and Father Caselli were at Paris as plenipotentiaries from the Pope; Joseph Buonaparte, Cretet, counsellor of state, and the Abbé Bernier were those of the First Consul. In the Catholic church the priests were all in motion, and in the world the politicians, each hoping to make the most of their different schemes. The single fact of a negotiation being on foot with the Pope was quite enough to show what there was to be expected, and what the First Consul had in view.



On the 21st of Prairial, one of the counsellors of state, N——, dined at Malmaison. After dinner the First Consul took him out alone with him into the park, and turned the conversation on religion. He combated for a considerable time the different systems of philosophers on modes of worship, deism, natural religion, &c. All this he designated as *ideology*. He more than once quoted Garat as at the head of the ideologists. "Hold," said he; "I was here last Sunday, walking out in this solitude, in the silence of nature. The sound of the bells of the church at Ruel suddenly struck my ear. I was affected; so great is the power of early habit and education! I said to myself then, what an impression must it not make on simple and credulous minds! Let your philosophers, your metaphysicians, reply to that: a religion is necessary for the people. It is also necessary that this religion should be in the hands of the government. Fifty emigrant bishops in the pay of England at present govern the French clergy as they please. It is necessary to destroy this influence; the authority of the Pope is required for that purpose. He displaces them, or makes them give in their resignation. It is declared that the Catholic religion being that of the majority of Frenchmen, it is proper to regulate the exercise of it. The First Consul nominates fifty bishops, the Pope inducts them. They name the curates, the state pays their salaries. They take the oath; those who do not are banished. Such of them as preach against the government are denounced to their superiors to be punished. The Pope confirms the sale of the goods of the clergy: he consecrates the Republic. They will then chaunt, *Salvam fac rem Gallicam*. The bull is arrived. There are only a few expressions to alter. It will be said I am a Papist. I am nothing. I was a Mahometan in Egypt, I will be a Catholic here for the good of the people. I do not belong to any religion; but the idea of a God"—and lifting his hands to Heaven—"Who is it," he said, "who has made all that?" N——

then spoke in his turn, for hitherto he had listened without saying a word :

"To discuss the necessity of a religion is to mistake the question. I am ready to allow the utility of a particular worship. But a religious worship may exist without a clergy ; for priests and a clergy are two very different things. There is implied in a clergy an hierarchy, one and the same spirit, one and the same end ; it is a body, a power, and a colossal one. If this body had the chief of the state for its head, the evil would be only half ; but if it acknowledges a foreign prince as its head, it is then a rival power. Never has there been a more favourable opportunity in France for making an entire revolution in religion. You have at present the constitutionalists, the apostolic vicars of the Pope, the emigrant bishops in England, with many shades of difference in all three. Citizens and priests, all is disunion ; and the greatest part of the nation is in a state of indifference."

"You deceive yourself," interrupted Napoleon, "the clergy exists always, it will always exist while there is a religious spirit in the people, and this spirit is inherent in them. We have had instances of republics, of democracies, of all that we see, but never any state without religion, without a form of worship, without a priesthood. Is it not better, then, to regulate the worship and gain over the priests than to leave things as they are ? At present the priests preach against the Republic ; are we to send them into exile ? No ; for to succeed in this we must change the whole system of government. What makes it popular is its respect for religion. We may send the English and Austrians out of the country ; but as to Frenchmen who have families and who are only guilty of holding other religious opinions, it is impossible. We must then attach them to the Republic."

*N* —. "They can never become sincerely attached to it. The Revolution has despoiled them of their

privileges and their property. They will never forgive this double offence, but will always wage war against it. They will be less formidable while they are scattered, than when they are established and re-united. There is no need either to banish or to persecute any one, but merely to let every priest say mass as he judges fit, and every Frenchman go to church or chapel as he pleases; and if, after all, the opposition of the priests to the Republic was pushed to such a point as to trouble the latter, I should not hesitate to sacrifice them to the public tranquillity."

*Buon.* "You would then proscribe them?"

*N——.* "Must we proscribe the Republic?"

*Buon.* "That is playing on words."

*N——.* "No, it is defining things. Besides, with a good discipline and an enlightened police, I do not think we should have occasion to proceed to that length."

*Buon.* "And, on my part, I tell you that the priests who shall accept of office will by that alone have made a schism with the old titular clergy, and will then be interested in preventing their return and in favouring the new order of things."

*N——.* "I hope it may turn out so, but I am not sure of it. This, however, is but a very small part of the great question. The Catholic religion is become intolerant, and its priests are counter-revolutionary: the spirit of the present time is entirely opposed to theirs; we are nearer the Gospel than they."

*Buon.* "What we are about to do will give a mortal blow to Popery."

*N——.* "On the contrary, it will revive and give it new force."

*Buon.* "Ought I not to do just the contrary to what Henry IV. did?"

*N——.* "Different times have different manners. For myself, if it is indispensable to have a predominant worship, I should prefer his."

*Buon.* "My good friend, you know nothing of the matter."

*N——.* "Everything is prepared for such a change. We are very differently situated from what England and Germany formerly were, and the times of the Reformation had not a Buonaparte. In the actual state of men's minds, you have but to say a word, and Popery is for ever ruined, and France declares for Protestantism."

*Buon.* "Ay, one half of it, and the other half will remain Catholic; and we shall have quarrels and dissensions interminable."

*N——.* "Had we reasoned thus during the Revolution, the constitutional assembly would have given way before the feudal system, and the National Convention before royal and hereditary right. Every revolution, political or religious, must look for opposition."

*Buon.* "Why then provoke it on the part of the people and the priests? The enlightened part of the community will not raise an insurrection against Catholicism; they are too indifferent. I then save myself great difficulties in the interior, and I can, by means of the Pope abroad"——There he stopped.

*N——.* "Yes, reckoning the sacrifices which will also place you in a state of dependence on him. You have to deal with an adversary who is artful and more powerful against those who treat with him than against those who have once broken with him. The thing offers at present only a favourable side. But when you imagine you have done with the Pope, you will see what will happen. The occasion is without example. If you let it escape——"

*Buon.* (*after a moment's reflection*). "My friend, there is no longer either good faith or belief; there is no longer any fear of the clergy; it is merely a political arrangement. Things are too far advanced to retreat, and the part which I have taken appears to me the safest."

*N——.* "Indeed, since the bull is arrived, all I could say must be of very little use."

Thus ended this remarkable conversation. It shows pretty clearly the motives that actuated Buonaparte in this measure—some latent feelings of religion, and the prospect of making use of the Papal See, as an engine of power, and also for restoring internal tranquillity. The question itself is one which I cannot pretend to judge, without knowing more of the state of religious feeling in France than I do ; but I shall attempt to lay down one or two general remarks on the subject, on which I think the solution of the problem and the policy or impolicy of Buonaparte's conduct may in a great measure be presumed to depend. In the first place, it appears to me right to consider not what is good in itself, but what is fit for the time and place in which it is intended to be put in practice. If Buonaparte could by a Concordat have brought back the times of Popery in their full power and splendour, when the Catholic faith was like one entire chrysolite without flaw or seeming spot in it, I should for one have no objection to that. Popery, whatever were its faults, its abuses, or its absurdities, was in this sense a true and noble religion, that it let down heaven upon earth. Men no more doubted of a future state and of the glory hereafter to be revealed than of their own existence ; and if the priests took possession of the power and riches of this world, they gave us another in lieu of it—no bad exchange. It was not a clear loss. This faith was implicit, firm, and pure, for it had never been called in question ; and the impression of that of which a doubt had never been entertained or was supposed to have been entertained by others, became by habit and the common consent of mankind equivalent to an object of sense. Europe was a temple in which Popery had its worship and its altars, was embodied in pictures and in imagery, was borne on the sounds of music, “like an exhalation of rich-distilled perfumes,” was solemnized in processions, in festivals, in ceremony, in dresses, in buildings, was sanctioned by the voice of learning, by the dread of power, showed its mitred front in

palaces and cities, smote the heart in the depths of solitude, shed its light on the path of life, and hung its lamp in the tomb. This state of involuntary abstraction was a great, perhaps the greatest benefit. There was no condition so high that it did not spread a lustre round it, none so low that it did not raise it from pain and from despair. Faith is the evidence of things unseen, and Popery furnished this evidence in the highest degree—a trust and conviction in sacred things, strengthened and exalted beyond the reach of doubt, of guilt, or passion by time, by numbers, by all that could appal or allure the imagination. Within the bosom of the Roman Catholic church, under the shadow of its countenance, there was a repose on “the Ancient of Days,” deep and calm as the sleep of cradled infancy. This is still in a good measure the case in Italy, where you see an innocent girl crossing her forehead with holy water, and feeling her soul refreshed; an old woman kissing the feet of a crucifix at the corner of a street, and not suspecting that this subjects her to the ridicule of any living being; an old man, bare-headed, making his annual pilgrimage to Rome, counting his beads, unconscious of all around, and eyeing St. Peter’s as the road to heaven, as if he were already entering the precincts of the New Jerusalem. To those who think this nothing I have nothing to say. Those who could take the finest aspirations and most gorgeous visions of the human mind as to its own origin, destiny, and nature, and make out of this air-woven theory a solid fabric and a material language, familiarised to the thoughts of the whole community, and speaking audibly to the lowest and the highest, were, I think, architects of human happiness and builders of the loftiest fiction. I so far approve of that deep sleep, of that solemn gloom, of those bright visions, and would not disturb them. It is to no purpose to tell me that the rites of this religion were childish mummeries, that these theoretical doctrines were the wildest absurdities—that moves me not a jot; when

I see truth and philosophy inspire the same enthusiasm and the same reverence that it is complained were lavished on folly and superstition, then I shall give the preference to the former over the latter. What does it import that in wrangling about the difference between real and pretended excellence, we arrive at the object of our pursuit and lose all feeling about it? Philosophers were so far wrong in relinquishing the hold which the other world gave them over the minds of the people. Ever since, instead of learned ease, leisure, dignity, they have had nothing but disputes, mortifications, and the contempt of the vulgar. What have those gained by it who were most active in sundering reason from authority? Have not those who have in fact advanced the cause of truth, and discovered any new link in the chain been uniformly exposed to the sneers of the world and baited with the rabble's curse? Have not the most daring and acute been exposed to the greatest obloquy? Have not the different sects in turn persecuted, slandered, and extirpated one another? We have discarded Popery, but have got nothing in its stead; or why complain of the servile submission to the infallibility of the Pope, when every one still believes just as much in the newspaper of the day or the libel he last read, but without the consistency, dignity, or quiet? Reason is not yet out of its long minority, nor has it mounted its promised throne. Could Buonaparte, therefore, have restored the pristine integrity of the Catholic church with all its accompaniments, I should have had no objection, but the thing was in our time impossible, just as much as it is impossible for the brain to dream waking; faith is founded on the sleep of reason, and he could only bring back hypocrisy, the abhorred alike of God and man. The only good of the Catholic religion was the faith in it, without which it would be like a painted sepulchre or an ill-acted play. Nay, more, could he have carried back the state of public faith and feeling to the time pre-

ceding the Reformation, this would not have been enough unless he could have violently suppressed all the causes then at work to produce its overthrow, unless he could have corrected the abuses and corruptions of Popery arising out of its very success and unbridled power, and thus have brought its pretensions into question, and given it a check that way; or to make it last another thousand years, have thrown the world back to the beginning of the dark ages, and to the period of the triumph of ignorance and barbarism over civilization and knowledge? But this was too much for any man to do, or even to think of. We must therefore work with the instruments that are allotted us; and no man can resist the spirit of the age in which he lives. The mind may reverence an absurdity, but cannot do so after it knows it to be one. That which before was held up as an object of awe and veneration, if in that case attempted to be forced upon it, becomes an insult. The world grows old like the individual, and has its season of enthusiasm and its season of indifference; but at all times affectation is bad. The faith in religion is good only while it is sincere. Why did people at the time of the Reformation give up Popery? Because it was found out to be an imposture, and they could not believe in an imposture, though they would. The Catholic religion without faith is stark-naught; and yet this is the only Catholic religion that could be established in France after the Revolution.

To make the public mind in France a fit recipient for Popery, that is, to restore the blind and implicit belief in it which could alone make it desirable, it would be necessary to enforce a strict quarantine against all those works in which for the last hundred years the faith in priests and Popery had been undermined by merciless wit and raillery: would the French people then give up Moliere or Voltaire to a Concordat? Nor would this be sufficient; it would be necessary to destroy or prohibit all works of reasoning, of history, or science; all that had contributed to



form the national mind and tone of thinking since the Reformation, and construct it anew out of the elements of chaos and the obscurest depths of ignorance. It would be necessary to destroy the press, an engine that would destroy whatever power attempted to crush it. It, however, seems to me that the establishment of Protestantism recommended above, would be even worse than the establishment of Popery; for if we must have an establishment, let us have the oldest. The Protestant religion is cold, formal, lip-service, that neither warms the heart nor inspires the head. In England, the established religion has no effect on the people; they go to church as a matter of course, or as a way of passing the time; but they neither understand what they hear, nor are they affected with what they see, nor do they think of it from one week's end to another. There are no pictures, no crucifixes, no incessant scene-shifting to keep them alive, no learned language which they think may be that of the other world. Hunger and the law alone keep them in order; the hope or fear of a future state is quite powerless, for they meet with nothing to remind them of it adapted to their ordinary habits and modes of thinking. The sectaries alone have any religion; and the Methodists all the enthusiasm. In Scotland it is different; in those cold and sterile regions the spirit of opposition to authority and of fiery controversy still encourages the zeal for religious forms and opinions, and is aided by the simplicity of manners and local circumstances. In Ireland we see Popery in its worst and most degraded state, where it is confined to the most ignorant of the people and not supported by public opinion, or by the authority of the state, though it has relaxed none of its claims to domination over the human mind. The priests and their flocks are well fitted to each other. Certainly, the way to detach the mass of the people from such brutish bondage is to remove every distinction or obstacle that separates them from the rest of the community. The way to prevent

others from leaguings and plotting against you is not to exclude them from your confidence or counsels. Statesmen talk of religion as necessary to the vulgar—this is the ridiculous air of a fine gentleman. The people have no religion but what they imbibe from their superiors. If the higher classes are without religion, they will soon find the lower imitating their example in this as in all other things. It is in vain to think of reserving infidelity as a private luxury for the rich. The poorer sort are spies upon the rich, and see through appearances with a shrewdness and tact often proportioned to their general ignorance and consequent suspicion of the motives and feelings of those at whose mercy and disposal they find themselves. If it were otherwise, the servants in great families would betray their masters' secrets, and do away by mischievous tattle all the good effects of their appearing once a-week at church in stately formality, as a compliment to heaven, and an example to their dependents. Hypocrisy must be deep indeed, systematic, and professional, that sets at defiance this ordeal; and we find even that the monks and priests, whose business it was and who had made a science of it, could not at the time of the Reformation carry on the farce any longer. The common people have eyes and ears; and society is an electrical machine, by which good and evil, vice and virtue are communicated with instantaneous rapidity from one extremity to another. The true solution of the difficulty is that given in the dialogue above, where the state counsellor recommends a perfect freedom and toleration of all sects and religions. Let each person follow and pay for his own religion, for it is contrary to equitable reasoning to make any one else pay for or follow it; nor is it any business of the state, except as an engine of power, which is an argument against it. It is not the duty of government to show us the way to the other world, but to afford us protection in this. The whole business of legislation reduces itself to establishing a good and effectual system of police, so as to keep the

peace between individual and individual. According to modern logic and prevailing sentiments, government ought to interfere as little as possible with religion or morals or the fine arts or commerce. Let these all be left to make their own way and to find their own level from their intrinsic and understood advantages, and let government merely stand by as a peace-officer to prevent any one from using violence or fraud in his transactions with others. It is pretty generally allowed at present that religion ought to be tolerated, and that trade ought to be free. At one time it was thought that both would perish, and that the community could not subsist, unless the government took the management and encouragement of both directly and absolutely into its own hands. The rule is, to give men leave to do all the good they can, only hindering them from hurting one another. The encouragement of the fine arts is useless, if the taste and genius of the people do not point that way; if they do, they will produce all their wonders and refinements from inclination and liking. Again, it is in vain to make laws to punish vice, if manners forbid their execution; it is equally useless if the manners preclude the vice. This observation, of course, applies only to personal vices, or to such as affect ourselves only, and not to such as immediately affect others. I believe a complete system of legislation might be formed upon some such simple principle as that of only opposing force by force; and perhaps the *Code Napoléon* might have approached nearer to it without inconvenience. The liberty of the press would have been one grand feature and corollary from such a system of legislation; and though Napoleon says he should have had "thirty royalist and as many Jacobin journals established to run him down," he might have baffled both in this way, as well as by shooting a bookseller.\* Libels or invectives do nothing against

\* An irritable poet, of great celebrity, whose political bias is no secret, being invited to a bookseller's dinner, was called upon for a literary toast or sentiment. He gave "Buonaparte." "What!

principles; and as to individuals, it is the attempt to suppress truth, that gives falsehood its worst edge. What transpires (however secretly or maliciously) in spite of the law, is taken for gospel; and as it is impossible to prevent calumny, so it is impossible to counteract it, while all that can be said in answer to it is attributed to people's not daring to speak the truth. Or if he could not take so bold and difficult a step in clearing the way to a new system, conformably with existing feelings and opinions, at least he need not have thrown any additional or unnecessary stumbling-blocks in its way, such as the revived Gallican church, which would impede the progress of society in its real path, and could not throw it back into its old station. That was not the sort of blocks of granite to cast on the soil of France, to give solidity and purchase to the new ideas of government and civilization. Besides, encouraging the priests was only warming the viper in his bosom; if triumphant, he needed them not; if in difficulty, they would be sure to betray him. There was no possibility of conciliating or rendering them neuter; even their impotence would only increase their malice by a comparison with former times, which their restoration would necessarily suggest.

The same objection might be made to the recall of the emigrants. As a step to reconcile men's minds to nobility, it might be politic, but not consistent with republican principles. Buonaparte asks on this subject (which I will so far anticipate), "Is it not natural to respect the son of a sage or a hero more than the son of a common man?" And the answer is, Yes, but not more than his father. This feeling, as far as it is natural, will have its effect without positive institution. The descendants of Milton and Shakespeare were living lately, but they were only thought of for the sake of their ancestors. Had they

Mr. —, did we understand you rightly? We asked you for a literary toast or sentiment." "Why, yes; egad—he shot a book-seller once!"

been mere nobles, their posterity would have been honoured and they themselves forgot. But it is said, that property is transmitted, and why not titles and honours? Because property can be transmitted, and the respect (such as it is) attendant on it; but talents and virtues are not transmissible, and therefore it is not parallel to say that the honours or homage originally paid to these should be transmitted by patent without them. This is making a property of honours and of public opinion, as a privilege to which men are entitled by birth and for their own sakes, and not for the benefit of the public. There is but one step farther necessary in this false train of reasoning to arrive at the principle of absolute monarchy, which makes a property of thrones and the rights and liberties of nations a byword!

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

## MARENGO.

Letter from the First Consul to the King of England; Lord Grenville's reply; preparations of the consulate for war; French divisions reach the Alps; passage of St. Bernard; Buonaparte enters Milan; Massena surrenders Genoa; action on the Po; battle of Marengo; Melas obtains an armistice; Genoa given up to Suchet; Buonaparte returns triumphantly to Milan; success of the French in Germany, and peace of Luneville; Buonaparte arrives in Paris.

It is necessary to return at present and take up the thread of historical events in their order. The first thing Buonaparte did on assuming the reins of government was to write a letter to the King of England soliciting peace. The letter and the answer to it are as follows, and both remarkable enough.

*“ French Republic—Sovereignty of the People—  
Liberty—Equality.*

*“ Buonaparte, First Consul of the Republic, to  
His Majesty the King of Great Britain and  
Ireland.*

“ Called by the wishes of the French nation to occupy the First Magistracy of the Republic, I have thought proper, in commencing the discharge of the duties of this office, to communicate the event directly to your Majesty.

“ Must the war, which for eight years has ravaged the four quarters of the world, be eternal? Is there no room for accommodation?

“ How can the two most enlightened nations in Europe, stronger and more powerful than is necessary

for their safety and independence, sacrifice commercial advantages, internal prosperity, and domestic happiness to vain ideas of *grandeur*? Whence is it that they do not feel peace to be the first of wants, as well as the first of glories?

"These sentiments cannot be new to the heart of your Majesty, who rule over a free nation with no other view than to render it happy.

"Your Majesty will see in this overture only my sincere desire to contribute effectually, for the second time, to a general pacification, by a prompt step taken in confidence, and freed from those forms, which, however necessary to disguise the apprehensions of feeble states, only serve to discover in those that are powerful a mutual wish to deceive.

"France and England may, by the abuse of their strength, long defer the period of its utter exhaustion, unhappily for all nations. But I will venture to say, that the fate of all civilised nations is concerned in the termination of a war, the flames of which are raging throughout the whole world.

"I have the honour to be, &c.

"BUONAPARTE."

The style of this letter has been criticised as empirical, and as an indecorous schooling of Majesty; and in all ordinary conjunctures the objection would hold good. But where the personal character and motives of the government were continually cavilled at, and made in this very instance an insuperable bar to peace, it was surely allowable for the chief magistrate to come forward in his own person and to take a frank and decisive step, as free as possible from official embarrassment and mystery. Though a diplomatic licence, it was at any rate a less flagrant one than the assassination of ambassadors, which was the *legitimate* termination of the last political negotiation (that of Rastadt) Buonaparte had been engaged in. If, however, his appeal to the personal feelings of George III. was forward and overweening, there is no

want of prudery and reserve in Lord Grenville's reply, which reminds one of Miss Harris's retort on her sister, who had proposed to forget all mutual faults, that "she has nothing to charge her conscience with." This comparison may be thought trifling and low; and I should think so, if meanness could not insinuate itself into cabinets nor hypocrisy mount upon a throne. The document is a curious and instructive specimen of the *cipher-hand* of Pitt, in which it is impossible to detect either beginning, middle, or end, which rings the changes of pompous and conventional phraseology on a continual vapid assumption of the question, which defines nothing, states nothing, proves nothing, but goes round and round in a circle of charges, committals, and equivocations, and in the flourishes and mazes of which (containing a deadly purpose under a routine of hollow common-places) England lost her liberties, her strength, herself and the world. It is a question between two governments, which is sincere in its desire of peace; and one of them endeavours to prove its sincerity by saying it will be ready to make peace with the other, *whenever it shall have ceased to exist*. Its existence is the avowed obstacle to peace; which, instead of a pledge of pacific intentions, amounts to a standing declaration of war. It is easy to see that the party which obstinately pronounces the other incapable of making peace, is itself determined against it. Few states would carry on war if their rivals would please to submit to their yoke. It is as if a person should profess a cordial desire and readiness to be reconciled to an enemy, on condition that the latter should hang himself on the next tree. This in private life would be thought an irony, instead of an amicable overture. What would have been said if Buonaparte had proposed to the King of Great Britain to resign his crown and authority in favour of a Republican form of government or of the surviving branch of the Stuarts, and that then he might make peace with him? Would it have been enough to screen such an



official outrage, to have added a saving clause, that this was not an absolute *sine qua non*; though, till it was complied with, he must carry on "a just and defensive war." Oh, no! This is only the language which established governments hold to green usurpations—it would not otherwise be borne; "it is the gibberish and *patois* of affected legitimacy," which "the gorge of freedom rises at;" it is outlawing a government under the mask of parleying with it; or inviting an adversary to sign terms of peace with a pen, while you, who set yourself up as both judge and executioner, strike off his hand with an axe. A very little of this tone is fatal to peace and liberty; we had nothing else for near half a century.

*"Lord Grenville in reply to the Minister of Foreign Relations at Paris.*

Downing Street, January 4, 1800.

"SIR,—I have received and laid before the King the two letters which you have transmitted to me; and his Majesty, seeing no reason to depart from those forms which have long been established in Europe for transacting business with foreign states, has commanded me to return, in his name, the official answer which I send you herewith enclosed.

"I have the honour to be, with high consideration,

"Sir, your most obedient, humble servant,

"GRENVILLE"

*"NOTE to the Minister of Foreign Relations at Paris.*

"The King has given frequent proofs of his sincere desire for the re-establishment of secure and permanent tranquillity in Europe. He neither is nor has been engaged in any contest for a vain and false glory. He has had no other view than that of maintaining, against all aggression, the rights and happiness of his subjects. For these he has contended against an unprovoked attack, and for the same objects he

is still obliged to contend; nor can he hope that this necessity could be removed, by entering at the present moment into negotiations with those whom a fresh revolution has so recently placed in the exercise of power in France; since no real advantage can arise from such negotiation to the great and desirable object of general peace, until it shall appear that those causes have ceased to operate, which originally produced the war,\* and by which it has since been protracted, and in more than one instance renewed. The same system, to the prevalence of which France justly ascribes all her present miseries, is that which has also involved the rest of Europe in a long and destructive warfare, of a nature long since unknown to the practice of civilised nations.† For the extension of this system, and for the extermination of all established governments, the resources of France have from year to year, and in the midst of the most unparalleled distress, been lavished and exhausted." [*That is, to prevent its own extermination*]. "To this indiscriminate spirit of destruction, the Netherlands, the United Provinces, the Swiss Cantons (his Majesty's ancient friends and allies) have successively been sacrificed. *Germany has been ravaged; Italy, though*

\* That is, the manifestation of a desire for peace on the part of the French government has nothing to do with the question of war, so that their hostility could not have been among the causes that produced or prolonged it. This is true; but instead of all this circumlocution and rotundity of phrase, would it not have been better and more manly for his Majesty to have said at once that he had gone to war for the royal cause, which he so broadly hints at in the concluding paragraph; and that till this object was attained, no earthly consideration (save the last extremity) should force him to make peace—and that then he would break it again as soon as possible, and launch into the same insane and fatal career—fatal alike, whether prosperous or unsuccessful!

† It is true it was long since Europe had joined to force a people to submit to a despotic yoke, for it was long since any people (on the continent) had shaken off such a yoke. The attacks of all Europe also gave a peculiar character to the war, by combining the horrors of civil discord with foreign aggression; and it was the determination of the French not to submit to this double blessing as a gracious boon, that produced the miseries of France and the resentment of Europe.

*now rescued from its invaders*, has been made the scene of unbounded rapine and anarchy.\* His Majesty has himself been compelled to maintain an arduous and burthensome contest for the independence and existence of his kingdoms. Nor have these calamities been confined to Europe alone; they have been extended to the most distant quarters of the world, and even to countries so remote both in situation and interest from the present contest, that the very existence of such a war was perhaps unknown to those who found themselves suddenly involved in all its horrors.† While *such a system* continues to prevail, and while the blood and treasure of a numerous and powerful nation can be lavished in its support, experience has shown that no defence but that of open and steady hostility can be availing. The most solemn treaties have only prepared the way for fresh aggressions; and it is to a determined resistance alone that is now due whatever remains in Europe of stability for property, for personal liberty, for social order, or for the free exercise of religion. For the security, therefore, of these essential objects, his Majesty cannot place his reliance on the mere renewal of general professions of pacific dispositions. Such professions have been repeatedly held out by all those who have successively directed the resources of France to the *destruction of Europe!*‡ and whom the present

\* Really this is too much even for a state paper. As if the French armies, after having beaten back the Austrians and Piedmontese, who were coming to ravage France, were to lay down their arms or refuse to set foot on a soil sacred to slavery, or were not to advance to meet, to scatter and pursue those ever-renewed bands of mercenaries and barbarians, that came on from the farthest bounds of Europe like flocks of ravenous birds seeking a prey, but bleaching the earth with their bones till victory was sated and "sweet revenge grew harsh."

† These pointed allusions to Italy and Egypt sound like personal taunts thrown out against Buonaparte, in return for his having made so untimely and unbecoming a proposal for peace.

‡ This, again, is in true character and keeping with that besotted presumption, which having been taught that it can do no wrong, sees, and can see only in the defeat of its own attempts at the destruction of others, a violent and unprovoked aggression on its absolute

rulers have declared to have been all, from the beginning and uniformly, *incapable of maintaining the relations of amity and peace*.<sup>\*</sup> Greatly, indeed, will his Majesty rejoice, whenever it shall appear that the dangers to which his own dominions and those of his allies have been so long exposed have really ceased; whenever he shall be satisfied that the necessity of resistance is at an end; that after the experience of so many years of crimes and miseries,<sup>†</sup> better principles have ultimately prevailed in France; and that all the gigantic projects of ambition, and all the restless schemes of destruction, which have endangered the existence of civil society,<sup>‡</sup> have been finally relinquished; but the conviction of such a change, however agreeable to his Majesty's wishes, can result only from experience and the evidence of facts. §

*"The best and most natural pledge of its reality*

prerogative; and privileged to confound its self-will with right reason, thinks it an unquestionable right, a sacred duty, to resort to every means to keep that privilege inviolate.

\* A government that can carry on war can make peace. They are convertible terms. The changes in the French government did not prevent their keeping on the contest, but they prevented us from closing it, by giving hopes of their utter ruin. The factions did not produce the war, but the war the factions.

† The fact of the crimes and miseries is undoubted; the cause of those crimes and miseries is the only thing in question. Of course his Majesty, with proper dignity, repelled any such imputation from himself and his allies, and the French people, by legitimate etiquette, must plead guilty to the whole. I am tired of noticing these flimsy bubbles, that expire at a touch.

‡ To wit, a certain perverse determination not to undergo the fate of Poland, an example which was not thought to endanger the existence of civil society, though it fed the hope which led to all those horrors of which his Majesty complains.

§ Let us look at the reasonableness of this favourable alternative. The change was to be effected in time of war. Was this the way to discourage or to foment those internal dissensions which tore France in pieces, and which caused those crimes and miseries which were the subject of so much outward lamentation and secret triumph? Peace was refused; therefore the French government must carry on the war. If they did this without judgment or success, this would be seized on as a motive for prosecuting it with double vigour; if they triumphantly repelled the new coalition, this would be made a pretence for crying out against fresh projects of ambition and aggrandisement. There is no end of this, nor of the contempt and odium with which a future age will brand it.

*and permanence would be the restoration of that line of princes which for so many centuries maintained the French nation in prosperity at home, and in consideration and respect abroad*”—[and which, be it remembered, carried on war for a great part of the last century to dethrone his Majesty's family, on the very same principle that he wishes to restore theirs];—“*such an event would at once have removed, and will at any time remove, all obstacles in the way of negotiation or peace.* It would confirm to France the unmolested enjoyment of its ancient territory; and it would give to all the other nations of Europe, in tranquillity and peace, that security which they are now compelled to seek by other means.\* But, desirable as such an event must be both to France and to the world, it is not to this mode exclusively that his Majesty limits the possibility of secure and solid pacification. His Majesty makes no claim to prescribe to France what shall be the form of her government, or in whose hands she shall vest the authority necessary for conducting the affairs of a great and powerful nation.† His Majesty looks only to the security of his own dominions and those of his allies, and to the general safety of Europe.‡ Whenever he shall judge that such security can in any manner be attained as resulting either from the internal situation of that country *from whose internal situation the danger has arisen, or from such other circumstances, of whatever nature, as may produce the same end,* his Majesty will eagerly embrace the opportunity to concert with his allies the means of immediate and general pacification. Unhappily *no such security*§ hitherto exists; no sufficient evidence of

\* It is with the existence of the republic, not with its acts, that the other governments are at war; why, then, charge the war upon its acts, except as a cover to the real motive, and confessedly a false one?

† Except by bombarding her towns and landing expeditions and brigades on her coasts, to restore the exiled Pretender.

‡ A mere verbal distinction, if the two things, security and interference with others, are inseparable.

§ No kind of security has been pointed out.

the principles by which the new government will be directed ; no reasonable ground by which to judge of its stability.\* In this situation, it can for the present only remain for his Majesty to pursue, in conjunction with other powers, those exertions of just and defensive war, which his regard to the happiness of his subjects will never permit him either to continue beyond the necessity in which they originate, or to terminate on any other grounds than such as may best contribute to the secure enjoyment of their tranquillity, their constitution, and their independence.

“ GRENVILLE ”

“ Downing Street, January 4, 1800.”

The answer to this thinly-varnished declaration was Marengo. Buonaparte was not the man to be stopped by a specious arrangement of rhetorical common-places: he pierced the web of hollow policy attempted to be woven round him with his sword. If not peace, then war. On receiving the account, he said to Talleyrand, “ It could not be more favourable.” He had not yet struck though he meditated the blow, which made Mr. Pitt, who had advised and reckoned largely on the continuance of the war, exclaim, “ Shut up the map of Europe, it will be in vain to open it for twenty years to come !” The battle of Marengo, by which Buonaparte broke the Continental Alliance, and seated himself firmly in power, though perhaps the worst-fought, the most doubtful and casual of all his victories, was at the same time the most daring in its conception and fortunate in its results. A single half-hour’s fighting changed the fate of Europe. This was owing to the manner in which the scene of action was laid. It was the most poetical of his battles. If Ariosto, if a magician had planned a campaign, it could hardly have been fuller of the romantic and incredible.

\* One way to insure that object would be to let it alone ; but this there was no intention of doing. It is fine fooling, when you are determined to undermine or knock a thing in pieces, to complain you do not know what chance it has of stability.

He had given wings to war, hovering like Perseus in the air with borrowed speed. He fell upon his adversary from the clouds, from pathless precipices—and at the very moment of being beaten, recalled victory with a word. It might be conceived that by effecting a junction with Massena at Genoa, and attacking the Austrians in front in the ordinary and obvious course, he would have had a better chance of victory; but then the victory could not have been so complete as by coming upon the enemy's rear and cutting off his retreat, nor would it have had the same effect in taking him by surprise. Buonaparte, situated as he was, had not merely to win a battle, but to charm opinion. The very boldness of the enterprise was an earnest of its success; the slightest reverse would in such critical circumstances produce a panic; and the First Consul, where another might have given up the day as lost, held out with confidence to the last, prepared to take advantage of every chance. Faith has its miracles in war as well as in religion. Nor is there quackery in this; for it is fair to seize upon the imagination of others and disarm them of their presence of mind as well as of their weapons. The only danger is, if this illusion comes afterwards to be dispelled by a reverse of fortune, both as it emboldens others and disheartens the person himself; but no one ever fought up against adversity better than Buonaparte (if we perhaps except the first stunning effect of the disasters in Russia), or, divorced from fortune, threw himself more manfully and resolutely on the resources of his own genius and energy, doing as much to retrieve his affairs as he had done to advance them.

On the 7th of January 1800 (three days after the date of the refusal of the British ministry to treat for peace) a decree of the consuls directed the formation of an army of reserve. All the veteran soldiers were required to come forward and serve the country under the command of the First Consul. A levy of 30,000 conscripts was ordered to recruit the army. General

Berthier, then minister-at-war, set out from Paris on the 2nd of April to head the troops ; the forms of the new constitution not allowing the First Consul to take the command nominally. No sooner was intelligence received of the commencement of hostilities and the turn which things were taking in that quarter, than he judged it expedient to march at once to the assistance of the army of Italy ; but he determined to cross by the Great St. Bernard, in order to take the army of Melas in rear, to seize his magazines, artillery, and hospitals, and to give him battle after having cut him off from Austria. The loss of a single battle would insure the destruction of his whole army and the conquest of Italy. This plan required much boldness, rapidity of execution, and secrecy. The last was very difficult to attain ; for the movement of an army cannot well be kept a secret. In order to conceal his plan, the First Consul determined to divulge it himself so openly, that the emissaries and agents of the allies were led upon a false scent, and ridiculed the pretended preparations as a stratagem to draw off the Austrian army which was blockading Genoa. Dijon was pompously pointed out as the place of rendezvous, and it was said that Buonaparte would proceed there to review the troops, which he actually did, though there were only 5000 or 6000 raw recruits and retired invalids assembled in the town. This army became an object of general derision, and caricatures were multiplied on the subject, one of which represented a boy of twelve years old and an invalid with a wooden leg, under which was written, "*Buonaparte's army of Reserve.*" Thus affected ridicule and contempt were the weapons with which they began, and by being persevered in throughout, succeeded at last ; for greatness sustains itself by an effort, but sinks easily to the level of the meanness and littleness of mankind !

Meantime the real army of reserve had been formed, and was ready to march. La Vendée having been pacified under the Consular government, a considerable



portion of the troops was drawn without inconvenience from that country. The regiments composing the guard of the directory were no longer required to keep things quiet at Paris and went to join the army. Many of these regiments had not served in the disastrous campaign of 1799, and retained their spirit and confidence unimpaired. The artillery was sent piecemeal from various arsenals and garrisons. The greater part of the provisions, necessary to an army which had to cross barren mountains where nothing eatable was to be met with, were forwarded to Geneva, embarked upon the Lake, and landed at Villeneuve, near the entrance of the valley of the Simplon. On the 6th of May the First Consul left Paris for Dijon, and arrived at Geneva on the 8th. He here had an interview with the celebrated Necker, who strove to recommend himself to his favour, but with little success. He praised the military preparations going on much, and himself more. On the 13th of May Buonaparte reviewed the vanguard of the army of reserve at Lausanne, commanded by General Lannes; it consisted of six old regiments of chosen troops, perfectly clothed, equipped, and appointed. It moved immediately forward to St. Pierre; the divisions followed in echelon, amounting in all to 36,000 fighting men, with a park of forty guns, and under the command of Victor, Loison, Vatin, Boudet, Chambarlhac, Murat, and Monnier. There is a road practicable for artillery from Lausanne to St. Pierre, a village at the foot of the St. Bernard, and from St. Remi to Aosta on the other side. The difficulty then lay in the ascent and descent of the Great St. Bernard, a difficulty so great as to appear nearly insurmountable. General Marescot had been sent to reconnoitre; and on his reporting that the passage seemed barely possible, Buonaparte replied, "Let us set forward then." The way over Mount Cenis presented the same obstacles, and the country beyond was more open and exposed to the enemy. There is only a rugged mountain-path over the St. Bernard, which often winds over

almost inaccessible precipices. The passage of the artillery was the most arduous task. The guns had been taken in pieces, and the carriages, the ammunition, together with the cartridges for the infantry and mountain-forges, were transported on the backs of mules. But how get the pieces themselves over? For this purpose, a number of trunks of trees, hollowed out for the reception of guns, which were fastened into them by their trunnions, had been prepared beforehand; to every piece thus secured a hundred soldiers were attached, who had to drag them up the steep. All this was carried into effect so promptly that the march of the artillery caused no delay. The troops themselves made it a point of honour to be foremost in this new kind of duty; and one entire division chose to bivouac on the summit of the mountain in the midst of snow and excessive cold, rather than leave their artillery behind them. Throughout the whole passage the military bands played, and at the most difficult spots the charge was beaten to give fresh animation to the soldiers; while the cry of the eagle was faintly heard, and the wild goat turned to gaze at so unusual a sight. Field-forges were established at the villages of St. Pierre and St. Remi for dismounting and mounting the artillery. The army succeeded in getting a hundred waggons over.

On the 16th of May the First Consul slept at the convent of St. Maurice, and the whole army passed the St. Bernard on the 17th, 18th, 19th, and 20th of May. Buonaparte himself crossed on the 20th, either on foot or riding a mule belonging to one of the inhabitants of St. Pierre, which the prior of the convent had recommended as the most sure-footed in all the country. His guide the whole way was a tall robust youth of twenty-two, who conversed freely with him, answering the questions that were put to him, and confiding all his troubles to the First Consul with the simplicity of his age and situation in life. Napoleon took no notice of his distresses, but on parting with him, gave him a note to the superiors

of the convent; and the next day, he was surprised to find himself in possession of a house, a piece of ground, and of all he wanted. The First Consul rested an hour at the convent of the Hospitallers, at the top of the Great St. Bernard, and performed the descent on a sledge down an almost perpendicular glacier. The horses had more difficulty in descending than in ascending, though few accidents happened. The monks of the convent were well provided with stores of wine, bread and cheese; and each soldier as he passed received a large ration from the good fathers.

On the 16th, General Lannes arrived with the vanguard at Aosta, a town abounding in resources, and on the 17th reached Chatillon, where he attacked and routed a corps of 4000 or 5000 Austrians, who had been stationed there for the defence of the place. The army thought every obstacle had been surmounted; it was marching through a fine valley, with plenty of everything, and mild weather, when all at once its progress was stopped by the appearance of Fort St. Bard; an interruption which was quite unlooked-for, but which had like to have proved fatal. This fort is situated between Aosta and Ivrea upon a conical hill and between two mountains at fifty yards distance from each other; at its foot flows the river Doria, the valley of which it absolutely bars: the road passes through the fortifications of the town, which is walled, and is commanded by the fire of the fort. The engineer-officers of the vanguard who approached to reconnoitre, reported that there was no passage except through the town; and General Lannes having attempted a *coup-de-main* which failed, the panic spread rapidly in the rear, and orders were even given for stopping the passage of the artillery over the St. Bernard. But the First Consul, who was at Aosta, immediately repaired to Fort St. Bard, climbed up the rock of Albaredo on the left-hand mountain, which overlooks both the fort and the town, and soon discovered the possibility of taking

the latter. There was no time to be lost: on the 25th, at nightfall, the 58th demi-brigade, led by Dufour, scaled the wall and gained possession of the town, which is only separated from the fort by the stream of the Doria. During the night the fort poured grape-shot at half-musket distance upon the French, but without dislodging them; and at last the fire ceased, out of regard to the inhabitants.

The infantry and cavalry passed one by one up the path of the mountain, the same which the First Consul had climbed, and which had hitherto been trod only by goatherds. On the following night the artillery officers and gunners took their guns through the town, using every precaution to hide the knowledge of the circumstance from the commandant of the fort: the road was covered with litter and dung, and the pieces, concealed under branches of trees and straw, were drawn by men with cords in the most profound silence. Thus was a space of several hundred yards traversed, close under the batteries of the fort. The garrison, though suspecting nothing, made occasional discharges, which killed or wounded a number of gunners; but did not damp the general zeal. The fort did not surrender till the 1st of June, the French by that time having planted several cannon on the Albaredo, which thundered on the batteries below. Had the passing of the artillery been delayed till the capture of the fort, the chief hopes of the campaign would have been lost. Thus do the greatest events depend on the most trifling causes; and so little would the best laid schemes avail without presence of mind in the execution and ingenuity in providing for casualties as they arise! The First Consul knew of the existence of Fort Bard, but believed it to be of no importance. The commandant dispatched letter after letter to Melas to inform him of the march of a large army with cavalry by a path of steps in the rock on his right, but assured him that not a single waggon or cannon should follow; and, on the surrender of the fort, the officers were surprised to learn the manner

in which the whole French artillery had passed within pistol-shot of them. Had it been impracticable to convey the artillery through the town, the First Consul would have taken up a position at the entrance of the passes at Ivrea (which would have forced Melas to fall back from Nice) and there awaited the taking of the fort.

Meantime, from the 1st of May, Melas had been marching troops on Turin, which he entered in person on the 22nd. On the same day the French general, Turreau, attacked the outposts on Mount Cenis with 3000 men, made himself master of it and took up a position between Susa and Turin, which gave the Austrian general some uneasiness. On the 24th, Lannes arrived before Ivrea, which being defended chiefly by cavalry or the troops which had been beaten at Chatillon, he easily took, the enemy retiring behind the Chiusella to Romano, whence he was driven two days after in disorder upon Turin. The advanced guard immediately took possession of Chivasso, whence it intercepted the passage of the Po, and seized a great many boats laden with provisions and wounded soldiers; and where, on the 28th, Buonaparte reviewed the vanguard, harangued and bestowed merited eulogiums on the corps that composed it. A feint having been made to throw a bridge of boats over the Po, Melas weakened his troops covering Turin, and detached a large part of his forces to the right bank of that river to oppose the constructing of the bridge. This gave the First Consul an opportunity to operate upon Milan unmolested. An Austrian officer who was known to Buonaparte, came to have a parley at the outposts; the intelligence he carried back to Melas had the effect of a thunderbolt upon him. The whole army of reserve, with its artillery, arrived at Ivrea on the 26th and 27th of May. A corps of 2000 Italian refugees, under General Lecchi, had on the 21st moved from Chatillon upon the Upper Sesia, met with the legion of Rohan which it defeated, and taken up a position in the valley of

Domo d'Ossola to secure the passes of the Simplon. Murat was at Vercelli; and Moncey's corps with 15,000 men detached from the army of the Rhine, reached Belinzona on the 31st of May.

The head-quarters of the Austrian army were at Turin, but half the forces were at Genoa, or scattered in the Col di Tende. In these circumstances three courses were open to Buonaparte. First, to march upon Turin, repulse Melas, join Turreau, and open a communication with France: but this would be to risk a battle with a formidable enemy without a certain retreat, Fort Bard not being yet taken. Secondly, he might pass the Po, and join Massena under the walls of Genoa; but this would be liable to the same objection without any general object. Thirdly, he might leave Melas behind, retire upon Milan, and there join Moncey, who had just debouched by the St. Gothard. The last plan was the most eligible, and that which he fixed upon. For by being once in possession of Milan, he could secure all the magazines, dépôts, and hospitals of the enemy's army; give him battle with this incalculable advantage, that if beaten, he would have no retreat, while his own would be safe by the Simplon and St. Gothard; or if he chose, he might let Melas pass uninterrupted, and he would thus, without striking a blow, remain master of Lombardy, Piedmont, the territory of Genoa, and raise the blockade of that capital. The Simplon led to the Valais and Sion, whither the magazines of the French army had been forwarded. The St. Gothard led into Switzerland, which was covered by the army of the Rhine then upon the Iller, and which had been for some time in possession of the French, such precautions affording too strong a temptation to a people that are declared to be incapable of maintaining the usual relations of peace and amity!

On the 31st of May, the First Consul moved rapidly upon the Ticino; and after a sharp resistance by the Austrian straggling troops (General Girard being the first to pass the river) the object was effected by the

help of four small boats. He entered Milan on the 2nd of June amidst the general rejoicing of the inhabitants, who were surprised at seeing him at the head of the troops, it having been reported that he had perished in the Red Sea. He remained here for six days, receiving deputations and showing himself to the people, who welcomed him as their liberator. The government of the Cisalpine Republic was restored; but a considerable number of the warmest Italian patriots languished in the dungeons of Austria. How many more groan there at present! A proclamation was addressed to the army, promising them as the result of their efforts "unclouded glory and solid peace." General Moncey's division came slowly up. The First Consul reviewed them on the 6th and 7th of June, and on the 9th set out for Pavia, which Lannes had occupied on the 1st, as Duhesme's division had entered Lodi and Mantua without opposition just after. Murat surprised Placenza by a *coup de main*, and intercepted a dispatch from Vienna full of the most groundless reports. Fort Bard had fallen on the 1st.

Melas now quitted Turin and appeared to direct his march on Alexandria to the right of the Po. The First Consul therefore detached Lapoype's division to line the Po from Pavia to the Doria Baltea, and to watch the side opposite Placenza; determining himself to move on Stradella, in order to cut off Melas from the road to Mantua and compel him to receive battle with his line of operations intersected by that river. General Lannes passed on the 6th at Belgiojoso, opposite Pavia; on the 8th Murat left Placenza, defeated an Austrian corps which had come up to attack him, and moved on Stradella, where the whole army was uniting. In the midst of these preparations news came of the taking of Genoa, which had surrendered on the 4th. Besieged by the Austrians by land, and blockaded by the English admiral (Keith) by sea, it had been pressed by famine; the inhabitants grew impatient, and on the 2nd of June

the women assembled tumultuously, demanding "Bread or death!" Everything was to be apprehended from hunger and despair; and Massena promised, if he were not relieved by the approach of some of Napoleon's troops in twenty-four hours, to capitulate. The next day the Adjutant-General Andrieux, who was sent to General Ott to treat for the evacuation of the place, met an Austrian staff-officer in the general's antechamber, who was the bearer of a despatch from Melas to raise the siege and to proceed in all haste upon the Po. Thus critically situated, he was glad to accede to Massena's proposals, and to let the French garrison of 10,000 men march out with their arms and baggage. Napoleon blames him for not marching at their head to join Suchet at Voltri and then facing about to attack the rear of the Austrians; but not knowing the real state of affairs he had agreed to let them pass out without a leader, and proceeded himself with 1600 men in vessels to Antibes. Napoleon therefore had now to trust to himself alone. Ott left Hohenzollern in command of Genoa, and came up by forced marches to join the main body of the Austrian army on the Po. This reinforcement amounted to thirty battalions, or about 18,000 men. Ott's grenadiers, which formed part of it, were accounted the flower of the Austrian troops.

On the evening of the 8th, the enemy's scouts came to observe the French bivouacs on the right bank of the Po. General Lannes with the whole French vanguard routed a body of 4000 or 5000 Austrians who advanced to attack him, not supposing the whole army to have crossed over; and at night he took up a position in view of the Austrian camp which occupied Montebello and Casteggio. He had no inducement to make an attack, having only 8000 men, and expecting reinforcements from Victor's division which was only three leagues off; but the Austrian general brought on the battle at daybreak. The contest was bloody. Lannes as well as the troops under him



behaved with the greatest intrepidity. About midday Victor came up and decided the event. The field of battle was strewn with the dead. The Austrians fought desperately, being sensible of the danger they were in, and still bearing in mind the successes of the last campaign. They lost a great number of killed and prisoners. When the First Consul arrived on the ground, everything was over. The troops, though worn out with fatigue, were overjoyed at their success. On the 10th, 11th, and 12th Buonaparte remained at Stradella, getting his army together, and securing its retreat by throwing two bridges across the Po. He sent messengers to Suchet to hasten his march upon the Scrivia. There was now nothing to hurry him, Genoa having fallen. It was dangerous to descend into the plain of Marengo to engage the enemy, who were greatly superior in cavalry and artillery, which could do little against his position at Stradella, with the Po and the adjoining marshes on his right, large villages in front, and considerable eminences to the left. During the battle of the 11th, Desaix, who had returned from Egypt and had been performing quarantine at Toulon, arrived at the head-quarters at Montebello, with Rapp and Savary. The whole night was spent in conferences between him and the First Consul on all that had passed in Egypt since the latter had quitted it—the negotiations of El-Arisch, the composition of the Grand Vizier's army, and the battle of Heliopolis. Desaix burned with eagerness to distinguish himself; he was immediately entrusted with the command of the division of Boudet.

Melas had his head-quarters and his whole army at Alexandria. He did not move, though his situation was critical and became more so every day, with Suchet in his rear and Buonaparte opposed to him in front with an imposing force. He might, however, either cut his way through the First Consul's army with superior numbers; or reach Milan by swift marches on the left bank of the Po, before the French could re-cross that river; or retreat upon Genoa, join

the English squadron, and regain Mantua and the Adige by the ports of Italy. It was in providing against these various chances (some of which probably never entered Melas's head) that Napoleon had nearly lost the battle of Marengo as he afterwards did that of Waterloo, by dividing his attention with over-jealous importunity over all that was possible, instead of confining his efforts to the main point. When all is at stake, it is better to guard against the worst than to aim at the utmost point of perfection. In consequence, General Lapoype was ordered to fall back upon the Ticino, to intercept the enemy, should he be moving in that direction, and Desaix was dispatched to the extreme left to observe the high road from Alexandria to Novi; while Buonaparte, uneasy at Melas's inaction, crossed the Scrivia on the morning of the 13th, and marched to San Juliano in the midst of the plain of Marengo, in vain looking for an enemy there. He slept that night at Torre di Garafola. Melas hearing of the advance of the French into the plain, recalled a detachment which he had sent against Suchet. The night of the 12th was passed in council. The blame of their situation was thrown upon the Austrian cabinet, who had listened to none but idle rumours; but they determined to fight their way out of it with arms in their hands. The chances were greatly in favour of the Austrians, who were superior in numbers and had three times as many cavalry as the French. The latter amounted to between 28,000 and 30,000 men.

On the 14th at break of day, the Austrians defiled by the bridges of the Bormida and made a furious attack on the village of Marengo, where Victor had established himself the day before. The resistance was obstinate for a long time. Buonaparte at the first sound of the cannon instantly sent orders to General Desaix, who was half a day's march to the left, to return with his troops to San Juliano. The First Consul arrived on the field of battle at ten in the morning, just as the Austrians had carried Ma-

rengo, and Victor's division, after a gallant defence, was giving way in the utmost disorder, the fugitives covering the plain, and crying out in dismay, "All is lost!" The enemy having taken Marengo advanced against General Lannes, who was stationed in the rear of the village, and formed in line opposite the right wing of the French, already extending beyond it. The First Consul immediately ordered 800 grenadiers of the cavalry-guard, the best troops in the army, to station themselves a thousand yards behind Lannes, inclining to the right, in a good position to keep the enemy in check; and directed the division of St. Cyr still farther on to Castel-Ceriollo, so as to flank the entire left of the enemy, while he himself with the 72nd demi-brigade hastened to the support of Lannes. In the meantime, the soldiers perceiving the First Consul, in the midst of this immense plain, surrounded by his staff and 200 horse-grenadiers with their fur caps, the sight revived their hopes, and the fugitives of Victor's corps rallied near San Juliano in the rear of General Lannes's left. The latter, though attacked by the main body of the enemy's force, fought with such bravery and coolness that he took three hours to retreat only three quarters of a league, exposed to the grape-shot of eighty pieces of cannon; at the same time that St. Cyr by an inverse movement advanced upon the extreme right, and turned the left of the Austrian line.

About three o'clock in the afternoon, the corps of Desaix came up. On seeing the disorder of the troops, he said, "Well, it is a battle lost!" Buonaparte replied, "I think it is a battle gained." He made Desaix take a position in front of San Juliano. Melas, who believed the victory decided, withdrew to Alexandria, overcome with fatigue, and left General Zach to finish the pursuit of the French army. The latter, thinking that this army was effecting its retreat by the road from Tortona, directed all his efforts to reach that place before them by carrying San Juliano

at the point of the bayonet; though, had retreat been necessary, Buonaparte had at the commencement of the action ordered it between Tortona and Salo, and the Tortona road was of no importance. The division of Victor had now rallied, and showed signs of impatience to renew the contest. All the cavalry was collected before San Julian, on Desaix's right and Lannes's left. Balls and shells showered into the place; and Zach had already gained possession of a part of it with a column of 6000 grenadiers. The First Consul gave orders to General Desaix to charge this column with his fresh troops. He proceeded to do so accordingly; but as he advanced at the head of a troop of 200 men, he was shot through the heart by a ball, and fell dead at the instant he had given the word to charge.\* By his death Napoleon was deprived of the man whom he esteemed most worthy to be his second in the field. He shed tears for his loss, never speaking of him afterwards without regret; and he was one of those who he believed would have remained faithful to him to the last. His death did not disconcert the troops, but inspired them with greater ardour to avenge it. General Boudet led them on. The 9th light demi-brigade did indeed prove itself worthy of the title of *Incomparable*. General Kellermann, with 800 heavy horse, at the same moment boldly charged the middle of the left flank of the column, cut it in two, and in less than half an hour these 6000 grenadiers were broken, dispersed, and put to flight. General Zach and all his staff were made prisoners.

Lannes immediately charged forward. St. Cyr who was to the right, and flanked the enemy's, left,

\* "Go," said the hero, "and tell the First Consul, that I die for the republic; happy if I carry with me to the grave a certainty that my death proves of as much utility to my country as I have ardently desired."

When Napoleon heard of the death of Desaix, and the circumstances attending it, he exclaimed with tears, "The victory is dear, purchased at such a price!"

was nearer the bridges of the Bormida than they were. The Austrian army was thrown into the utmost confusion, and only thought of flight. From 8000 to 10,000 cavalry spread over the field, fearing St. Cyr's infantry might reach the bridge before them, retreated at full gallop, overturning all in their way. Victor's division made all imaginable speed to resume its former position at the village of Marengo. The pressure and confusion at the bridges of the Bormida was extreme, and all who could not pass over fell into the power of the victor. It would be difficult to describe the astonishment and dismay of the Austrian army at this sudden change of fortune. General Melas, having no other resource, gave his troops the whole night to rally and take some repose, and the next morning at daybreak sent a flag of truce with proposals for an armistice, by which the same day Genoa and all the fortified places in Piedmont, Lombardy, and the Legations were given up to the French army, and by which the Austrian army obtained leave to retire behind Mantua without being made prisoners of war. Thus was the conquest of all Italy achieved by a single blow.

Melas obtained such favourable terms from an apprehension that in case of a refusal he might still effect his junction with the English army of 20,000 men who had just arrived off Genoa and the Austrian garrison of 10,000 men at that place, and because the French had no strong places in Italy. General Suchet marched upon Genoa and entered that city on the 24th of June, which was given up to him by Prince Hohenzollern to the great mortification of our troops who had come in sight of the port. The Italian fortresses were successively given up to the French, and Melas passed with his army through Stradella and Placenza, and took up a position behind Mantua. Soon after the battle of Marengo, the Italian patriots were released from the Austrian prisons, and returned home amidst the congratula-

tions of their countrymen, and cries of "*Long live the Liberator of Italy!*" There were no Italians thrown into prison in Buonaparte's time. Either therefore the Italians must have been more favourably inclined to the new order of things, or his rule was much milder than the Austrian. Buonaparte set out from Marengo for Milan on the 17th; he found the city illuminated, and a scene of the most animated rejoicings at the change which had taken place. Genoa recovered its Republican form of government. The Austrians when in possession of Piedmont had not reinstated the King of Sardinia on his throne, notwithstanding the expostulations of the Russians, nor allowed him to approach Turin. The First Consul established a provisional government in Piedmont, and appointed General Jourdan to superintend it, in order to give him a mark of his confidence, and to efface old misunderstandings. Massena, notwithstanding his unlucky surrender of Genoa, and as an acknowledgment of his services at the battle of Zurich, was left in the chief command of the army of Italy.

In France the news of the battle of Marengo was at first scarcely credited. The first account that reached Paris was brought by a commercial express who had set out from the field of battle between ten and twelve o'clock, and reported that the French army had been totally defeated. This only made the contrast more striking, when the victory over the enemy was made known with all its attendant advantages to the Republic. But can it be believed (as it is said) that on this mere report of a defeat all the intriguers were in motion to displace the First Consul and place Carnot at the head of the government in his stead? Oh! ever prone to run before opinion, and to rivet disgrace upon themselves by shrinking from all participation in misfortune! It may be supposed that Buonaparte took no slight umbrage at this meditated dereliction, and looked gloomy on his return amidst all the lustre which wreathed his brow,

perhaps presaging future disloyalty, or brooding over sweet and bitter thoughts of the curbs which such a people required ! He is said from this time to have conceived a jealousy and distaste to Carnot, which subsequent bickerings did not diminish. They came together at last in the common cause, in the pass of Thermopylæ ! This story, however, rests on no good authority, though it is not improbable in itself. The soldiers of the army of the Rhine when they heard of the battle of Marengo were ashamed of having done so little, and avowed a noble emulation not to lay down their arms till they had done something to match it. The battle of Hohenlinden followed not long after. Moreau pursued his victory, taking possession of Salzburg : Augereau, at the head of the Gallo-Batavian army, penetrated into Bohemia, and Macdonald, passing through the Grison country into the Valteline, formed a communication with Massena. The peace of Luneville was the reluctant consequence, by which Tuscany was ceded to France, and the whole left bank of the Rhine. Each of these conditions was peculiarly galling to the Emperor, because Tuscany belonged to his brother ; and as to the provinces on the Rhine, he objected to giving away what was not his to bestow. Had the question been to take what did not belong to him, there would have been less difficulty.

Buonaparte set out for Paris the 24th of June through Turin, crossed Mount Cenis, and stopped at Lyon for some time to gratify the curiosity of the inhabitants, and to lay the first stone of the Place Bellecour, which had been pulled down in the beginning of the Revolution. He arrived at Paris on the 2nd of July, unexpectedly, and in the middle of the night ; but the next day, as soon as the news was spread abroad, every one ran to testify their eagerness and joy ; the labouring classes left their occupations, and the whole city thronged round the court and windows of the Tuileries to see him to whom France

owed another respite from bondage with such unlooked-for triumphs. At night every house was illuminated, even the poorest inhabitants taking part in the general rejoicing. It was a day, like which few occur in history; yet, in this instance, how many such were crowded into the life of a single man. The Pillar of Victory still stands in the Place Vendôme; and the French, reduced to their natural dimensions, sometimes stop to wonder at it.



## CHAPTER XXIX.

## THE INFERNAL MACHINE.

Attempts to assassinate the First Consul ; the infernal machine ; transportation of the Jacobins ; report of the police minister on the infernal machine, and its contrivance ; execution of two of the conspirators.

FOREIGN war and intestine commotions having failed, recourse was next had to assassination, to get rid of the head of a government which promised no stability, and every truce or peace with which was held to be a kind of profanation—or null and void, like a forced compact with robbers. Both the royalists and Jacobins agreed in this as their *forlorn hope* ; the last seeing in Buonaparte an immediate obstacle to the execution of their plans ; the former seeing in him (let his acts and pretensions be what they would) the utter extinction of the principle from which, according to them, all power ought to flow. This coincidence alone, had they been capable of attending to anything but their own headstrong will which they mistake for reason, should have given the violent republicans pause ; for “the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light,” and the satellites of power are led by an infallible instinct to what promotes their cause, are steady and consistent, and always take the surest means to their one sole end. The friends of liberty on principle (divided as they are among themselves and distracted by various theories) have only to look as a practical guide to their conduct to the enemies of liberty on principle. They cannot be far out while they oppose the common foe face to face and hand to hand. As long as Buona-

parte remained a stumbling-block and a bugbear to the latter, and they bent all their efforts of open force or secret machinations against him, he should have been still regarded as on the broadest scale, the refuge and the rock of salvation of the popular side. They might wish to get rid of him as a matter of taste or reasoning: in point of fact, they could do without him. He himself had great dread of the Jacobins, as was but natural, and which showed the secret affinity between his cause and theirs. "Tis conscience that makes cowards of us all." He knew from experience what their feelings and principles were; and as the attraction was stronger, the repugnance and struggle to disentangle himself from them was proportionably violent, as men hate the vices to which they are most prone. As to the opposite pretensions, they appeared to him like mere shadows or a faded pageant. He never entered into the essence of royalty, or he would not have trusted himself to it. He might assume it as a robe, but it never made a part of the man. He on this account pronounced royalism to be a disease of the skin, but Jacobinism to be "an internal disorder," because he felt it within himself. He declared that "with a company of grenadiers he would put the whole Faubourg St. Germain to flight, but that the Jacobins were an incorrigible set to deal with." It would not appear so by the event. If the first are easily put to flight, at least they return to the charge; and they do so, because they are governed not by reason but by custom, and are the creatures not of circumstances or experience, but of implicit faith and old allegiance. The motto of legitimacy and of all belonging to it is in a word inveterate prejudice without reflection, and power borrowed from accident: Buona-parte was originally and unalterably the reverse of this, the very counterpart and antidote to it; intellect without prejudice, and inherent power and greatness. He did not even seem to comprehend the reverence due to antiquated absurdity, nor the omnipotence of eternal imbecility.

The first attempt made was by some discontented Italian patriots—Arena, brother to the deputy who was said to have aimed a dagger at Buonaparte in the Council of Five Hundred, with whom were united Ceracchi and Diana, two Italian refugees, Topino Lebrun, a painter, and two or three more enthusiasts in a low condition of life. Italians have long been in the habit of resorting to the dagger for a worse cause than that of removing a tyrant, or imitating the example of their countryman Brutus. One of these men had been a great admirer of Buonaparte, and had made a statue of him during his first campaigns in Italy; but he afterwards grew dissatisfied with his conduct, and determined to take his life. For this purpose, he solicited permission to make another model; but his heart failed him when the time came. The conspirators then formed a plan to assassinate the Chief Consul at the Opera-house. They were betrayed by an accomplice, and two of them, Ceracchi and Diana were arrested by the police behind the scenes, armed and prepared to execute their design. Buonaparte spoke slightly of the attempt: “a look,” he said, “from his brave guard would have disconcerted them.” The circumstances were not made public, nor were the conspirators brought to trial till the repetition of similar attempts seemed to make an example necessary. Yet on such frail threads did the hopes of cabinets at this time depend, that Talleyrand declared in the council of state that “the affair of Ceracchi and his associates had interrupted all diplomatic communications for a considerable time, particularly with the Emperor of Russia, who broke off a treaty in consequence, and made it necessary to re-open the campaign!”

Soon after, a man of the name of Chevalier with another named Veyser, who belonged to the old *terrorist* faction, contrived a plan to kill the First Consul by means of an *infernal machine*, or a barrel of gunpowder stuck round with grape-shot and pieces of old iron, and placed in such a manner as by the

assistance of a slow match to explode at the moment when the First Consul was passing through the street. A man who had been employed to lay caltrops, so that the carriage could not move on, told his suspicions to the police. The experiment was tried in the outskirts of Paris, and the explosion led to the discovery and arrest of the parties, so that the scheme never came to anything, though it was hushed up for reasons of policy. The royalists became acquainted with these men in prison and with the plot they had hatched, and readily conceiving that "the sovereign'st thing on earth" was such a remedy for a desperate cause, in their hands it had very nearly produced the effect intended by it. A letter from the Count de Lille to Buonaparte, inviting him to restore the crown of France to him, having been answered with cold politeness, and a mission of the beautiful Duchess of Guiche to Paris to insinuate the same gracious project having ended in her receiving orders to quit the country, it was time to exchange these persuasive arts for stronger measures. On the evening of the 10th of October, 1800, Buonaparte had agreed to go to the Opera; but afterwards being unwell or fatigued by business, changed his mind and wished to stay at home. Josephine and one or two friends who were with him persisted in urging him to go, and came to a couch where he had fallen asleep and waked him at the time. One brought him his hat, another his sword. He was in a manner forced into his carriage, where he again fell fast asleep and was dreaming of passing the Tagliamento, when all of a sudden he awoke amidst noise and flame. He had passed this river in great peril by torch-light three or four years before, when his carriage was set afloat by the stream; and the flashes of fire and sudden lifting up of the carriage by the explosion on the present occasion, no doubt, produced the coincidence in his dream. The circumstances were these. A cart bearing the barrel of gunpowder with the other implements of destruction as described above, had been placed by two of

the conspirators, Carbon and St. Regent (who had been Chouan chiefs), at the corner of the Rue St. Nicaise, where the First Consul had to pass, in such a manner as to intercept the progress of the carriage, which had hardly room to get by. St. Regent had set fire to the match at the appointed instant; but the coachman, who was intoxicated, driving unusually fast, the carriage had passed the machine a second or two before it went off, which defeated the project. The explosion was terrible. It reached the horse of the last man of Buonaparte's guard, shattered the windows of the carriage, killed eight persons, wounded twenty-eight (among the rest the incendiary St. Regent), and damaged a great number of houses. The report was heard for several miles round Paris. Buonaparte immediately exclaimed to Lannes and Bessières who were with him in the coach, "We are blown up!" They would have stopped the carriage, but he ordered it to drive on, and arrived in safety at the Opera, where the noise had been heard, and where his entrance, together with the disordered looks of his attendants caused great agitation; but the calm appearance of the First Consul reassured the audience, and the performance, which was Haydn's *Creation*, went on. Buonaparte's coachman, Cæsar, remained the whole time insensible of what had happened, and had taken the explosion for the firing of a salute: but a dinner having been given him by his brother coachmen in honour of his escape, a hackney-coachman, who was present, said he knew who had played him the trick, having seen the cart issue from a stableyard near which he took up his stand; and this clue led to the discovery of the real authors of the conspiracy.

In the meantime, Buonaparte was furious against the Jacobins and against the minister of police, whom he accused of conniving at their plots and machinations. At several councils of state which were held upon the subject, he declaimed against the metaphysicians, went back to the Septembrisers, the affair of Babœuf, the 31st of May, constantly exonerated the

priests and the royalists, and charged the whole upon a handful of miscreants, who were invariably at war with all established governments, and with the peace of society. Fouché, by his sullenness and reserve, did not remove these suspicions, though he persisted in ascribing the attempt to the Chouans and their party. The First Consul wished for an act of summary justice against the remains of the Jacobins, which after several impatient discussions and considerable reluctance on the part of the council of state and the legislative body he obtained; and 130 of the principal agitators (men obnoxious from their share in the Reign of Terror, such as Choudieu, Taillefer, Thirion, Talot, Felix Lepeletier, Rossignol, and others) underwent a sentence of transportation, which was carried into instant effect, though some of them were allowed to return at a subsequent period. An attempt was made by Berlier\* to save two of them, Talot and Destrem, from being punished for a crime of which it was very soon known they had not been guilty; but this met with a cold reception from the First Consul, who said they had been condemned as enemies of the state, and referred in proof to the act of the legislative body, in which not a word was said of the 10th of October. This was vindicating injustice by chicanery.

A month after the affair had happened, the minister of police made his report on the attempt of the infernal machine. He had the contrivers in his custody; and they turned out (as he had all along predicted) to be agents of the royalist party. He entered into a detailed account of the plot to assassinate the First Consul as brought over from England by Georges Cadoudal in the November preceding, of the landing of his accomplices, Carbon, Joyan, Lince-

\* At the time that Buonaparte was accused of favouring the royalists too much, he addressed Madame Monge, and said, "You will be satisfied with me to-day; I have appointed three Jacobins to the council of state."—Who are they, First Consul?"—"Réal, Brune, and Berlier," was the reply.

lan, St. Regent, &c., of their intrigues, and the impenetrable mystery which involved them. At length, the horse which had been fastened to the infernal machine afforded some traces; and led to the seizure of Carbon, who being found secreted in the house of two nuns, Madame Goyon and Madame de Cicé, made a discovery of the whole affair. These gentlewomen, in secreting a public assassin, were doubtless influenced by mistaken motives of piety and loyalty. St. Regent and Carbon were condemned, and suffered on the scaffold, though they were tried before the ordinary tribunals and in common course of law; which made the arbitrary decree which had been passed against a number of innocent individuals appear in a more unfavourable light. Nothing can excuse Buonaparte on this occasion but the imminent peril he was in, and the previous attempts against his life by fanatics of the same party, which had worked up his old grudge against them to a pitch of violent irritation; and which having once fixed his purpose, he would not relinquish it when the immediate grounds were removed. It is hard for a man to be shot at like carrion because he is not a piece of well-preserved mummy by one party, or a man of straw by the other; and in the distraction of the moment, he will wreak his vengeance on the first object that presents itself. I cannot help entertaining some doubt, that there was from the beginning an understanding between Fouché and Buonaparte, and that the detection of the true conspirators was postponed till the blow had been struck against the pretended ones, who were equally formidable to him, whether he looked to past events or future contingencies. If they could not brook the First Consul, how should the Emperor escape! The silence and inaction of so complete a double-dealer as Fouché are suspicious. The other conspirators, Chevalier and Veyser, and Arena, Ceracchi, and their coadjutors were soon after tried and executed. The republican faction made no more attempts of the

kind. It was not till after repeated experience that Buonaparte became convinced, that those who act on their own impulses and from a love of liberty and independence are less dangerous than those combinations; where, in the casting of the parts, the principals are safe and remote, and where the subordinate agents are merely blind and servile instruments in the hands of their superiors. The bands of *Chauffeurs* or Chouans who infested the public roads, and kept up a daring and clandestine communication between intriguers in the capital and foreign powers were the occasion of the appointment of a special tribunal to try such offences. No coach could venture to leave Paris without a guard of four soldiers. This has been considered as a stretch of ungovernable ambition and a stride to absolute power. It was surely a measure also of private self-defence and public safety. The Orangemen are supposed to justify the promulgation of military law in Ireland; as a few spouting-clubs produced the suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* in England. When Mr. Fox was over in Paris in 1802, he used to have frequent and warm disputes with the First Consul on the subject of the infernal machine, the latter laying the blame of it on the English government, and the former vehemently repelling the charge on the ground that no Englishman would lend his countenance to assassination. This argument showed his own patriotism and honesty: but the feelings of a nation change with its maxims, and these are impaired by the cause in which you embark and the associates whom you select. Mr. Wyndham in his love of paradox and extreme abhorrence of the principles of Jacobinism might see the matter in a very different light. It might be thought a courtesy to foreign manners as well as a compliment to foreign princes—who were frantically calling out, “Give us a tomb or a throne!”—adroitly to remove the great impediment to the latter; and members of the British cabinet might be found then as well as twenty years after to ask,—“What is the death of General Buona-



parte to us," whether owing to a sudden explosion or a lingering climate?\*

\* For a further elucidation of a certain undertone in English casuistry on this subject at the period referred to, see an elaborate article on tyrannicide in a paper called "The Friend," by S. T. Coleridge. "The ghost is an honest ghost," and speaks, I'll be bound, no more than was set down for him. This shows how much the national spirit must have been altered, and how strong the tide must have set in to the support of legitimacy by the most unwarrantable means, when the finest intellects could not escape the general contagion, and could only avoid general obloquy by withdrawing into privacy, or lending themselves to the basest prostitution.

## CHAPTER XXX.

## PEACE OF AMIENS.

Events immediately preceding the peace of Amiens ; assassination of the Emperor Paul ; Portugal compelled to conclude a peace with France ; surrender of Malta to the English ; peace of Amiens ; Buonaparte permits the return of the emigrants with certain exceptions ; the concordat carried into effect ; replies of Delmas and Rapp to Napoleon ; affairs of St. Domingo ; establishment of the polytechnic and other schools ; Buonaparte's encouragement of the arts and manufactures ; his internal improvement of the country ; the code Napoleon ; conversation between Napoleon and Counsellor N—— on his proposed appointment to the consulship for life ; Josephine's fears relative to an hereditary succession being insisted on ; Buonaparte's opinion on the peace of Amiens ; observations on his foreign policy ; Lafayette's letter to Napoleon on his consulship for life ; symptoms of a rupture between England and France.

BUONAPARTE had erected Tuscany into a kingdom, and given it to the Duke of Parma, an Infant of the House of Spain, under the title of the King of Etruria. He and his wife\* paid a visit to Paris in May 1801. It was on this occasion that the audience at the theatre enthusiastically applied to Buonaparte the verse—

*"J'ai fait des rois, Madame, et n'ai pas voulu l'être."*

The Count of Leghorn (for it was under this title that

\* Maria-Louisa, sister of Ferdinand VII. of Spain, since Duchess of Lucca. The late Duchess of Lucca was universally hated for her avarice, insolence, and duplicity. To give an instance of the manner in which these people make use of religion and authority as a screen for the most monstrous or the most petty vices, she had ordered a costly chandelier to ornament her private chapel ; but the tradesman who had made it, knowing her utter disregard of pecuniary obligations, was unwilling to part with it till he had been paid the money. On this, she prevailed upon him to hang it up under pretence of seeing the effect. "There !" says she, "now it is consecrated property ; take it down at your peril !"

he travelled) turned out a very poor creature according to common report, and it was on this account that Buonaparte had him shown ostentatiously about, "to let people see how a king was made. It was enough to disgust them with royalty." There was more policy than honesty in this proceeding. It might seem by this as if he had not at the time a design of becoming one himself, though still it was tampering, as it were, with the subject; and it was obvious to infer that the diadem which he gave to another he might bind on his own brow. He must certainly feel that he was made of very different stuff from ordinary kings. When I think of that fine head (so unlike a crowned head), of those Republican bands led by freedom to victory, of that severe and almost antique simplicity of aspect which France presented as a contrast to the Gothic frippery of her old government and the rest of Europe, I am still willing to believe that the changes which were afterwards carried into effect were alien to his own breast, were a concession to those who prefer the tinsel to the gold, and were forced from him (in sullen scorn and defiance) by the persevering determination to annul and disallow all claims (how sterling or lofty soever) but those which were founded on external sound and show. We shall see that he himself speaks with great confidence and complacency of the favourable impression made on foreign courts by his surrounding himself with the usual paraphernalia and symbols of power.

The allies certainly reckoned on the loose and fluctuating mass of power in France, as the great means of disuniting and subduing it, either by want of concert in the armies or by the collision of the different factions. The danger on this side, at least, Buonaparte averted by taking the reins into his own hands, and giving unity and stability to the state; and, come what would, France thus secured the great principle of the Revolution, the right of changing her existing government for one more congenial to it; like England, which had altered the succession, but

retained the forms of her established constitution. The continental powers saw the advantages which the new government derived from the change ; and though they did not hate it less, feared it more :—

—— “ Like to a sort of steers,  
'Mongst whom some beast of strange and foreign guise  
Unwares has chanced, far straying from his peers :  
So did their ghastly gaze betray their hidden fears.”

The Emperor Paul alone, the most rash and splenetic amongst them, seemed to swallow the bait entire ; and disappointed at the ill successes of his troops under Suwarrow, and disgusted with the exclusive maritime claims set up by the English and their selfish conduct, made common cause with Buonaparte, and gave himself up to his admiration of the man as a kind of infatuation, disregarding the political principle for the sake of the dramatic effect. This soon led to his own tragic end. His new associate did not neglect the opportunity to ingratiate himself with Paul. The English had refused his request to give up Malta to the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem ; Buonaparte sent him the sword which Pope Leo X. had given to the Grand Master, L'Ile Adam, for his defence of Rhodes against the Turks. The English ministry refused to include 8000 or 10,000 Russian soldiers taken either in Italy or in Holland under the Duke of York's command, in an exchange of prisoners ; Buonaparte had them collected together, clothed and equipped, and sent back to Russia. Napoleon also sent a French actress to St. Petersburg. The Queen of Naples, alarmed at the part her court had lately taken against the French, and at the defeat of General Damas soon after the battle of Marengo, made a journey express to Petersburg to solicit the intercession of the Emperor Paul ; and at his request Buonaparte spared Naples. The Czar was overpowered with so many marks of courtesy and generosity. He was ready to run his errands, to do his bidding, to “ put a girdle round about the earth ” or close up the passage of the seas for him. He lent a favourable ear to a

project for marching a joint army of French and Russian troops through Persia to the Indus, and entered heart and hand into the armed neutrality of the North. He addressed a letter to Buonaparte couched in these terms: "Citizen First Consul—I do not write to you to discuss the rights of men or citizens; every country governs itself as it pleases. Wherever I see at the head of a nation a man who knows how to rule and how to fight, my heart is attracted towards him. I write to acquaint you with my dissatisfaction with England, who violates every article of the law of nations, and has no guide but her egotism and interest. I wish to unite with you to put an end to the unjust proceedings of that government." This alludes to the encroachments at this time made by the English in the right of search at sea, very necessary perhaps as a measure of security to give her the uncontrolled command of the sea, but contrary to old established custom and to all previous treaties. The Americans, disgusted with the violence of the Directory, and provoked by the attempts of Talleyrand at speculation, had for some time sided with the English and nearly gone to war with France; but the steps taken by the First Consul restored the friendly intercourse between the two nations. Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, who were at peace with England, enraged at seeing their fleets and vessels stopped on the high seas as interlopers by English cruisers, and dragged into English ports as felons, joined with Russia to resist such arbitrary and unadmitted claims. The Emperor published an edict to seize on all British goods and subjects in his dominions; the three great northern fleets were to assemble in the Baltic and to be prepared to act offensively in the spring of 1801. The Danes took possession of Hamburgh, thus cutting off the navigation of the Elbe; and Prussia, like a gaunt hound, did not scruple to seize on Hanover (the independence of which it was especially bound to guarantee) as a mark of the good faith and disinterestedness of regular governments towards each other. This

maritime coalition was broken up by two events, by the gallant and desperate attack of Nelson on the Danish fleet in the Sound (in which he ran all the risks of bravery and genius, though with less than his wonted success); and by the death of the Emperor Paul, who was assassinated in the night of the 23rd of March 1801, by those of his own household. His son succeeded him. The death of a sovereign seemed to cost little, so that the sovereignty survived; the historic muse did not put on mourning for the occasion, nor did Europe talk of waging eternal war against those who had thus staggered the person of an anointed king. The ashes of a monarch are no more than common dust, unless when the tree of liberty rises out of them; as regicide, sacrilege, treason are words of slight import, provided they are not coupled with the rights and happiness of millions. It is then that both princes and people stand aghast, and (strange as it may seem) league together for mutual safety and support! On the arrival of the news in London, instead of the Russian ambassador receiving his passports, Lord St. Helen's proceeded forthwith to Petersburg. Buonaparte, who might think they would use little ceremony with him, if they turned round in this manner on one of their own *clique*, was the only person who seemed shocked at it; and his ministers had some difficulty in recalling to his mind that it was no more than the common mode of disposing of arbitrary sovereigns in despotic countries. Paul's successor, not willing to afford a similar triumph to the zealots of religion and social order, hearkened to the counsels of his father's murderers. The Northern Powers acquiesced (perforce) in the maritime claims advanced by England; Denmark gave up Hamburg, Prussia let go its grasp on Hanover, and things remained much on the same footing as before on that side of the Continent. Soon after, in June 1801, Buonaparte, in concert with Spain, marched an army into Portugal, took Olivenza and Almeida, and forced the Prince-Regent of Portugal (who was son-in-

law to the King of Spain, and the close and strenuous ally of England) to conclude a separate peace and shut its ports against the English. In the meantime, Malta had surrendered to the English fleet; and the French forces in Egypt, attacked and beaten by the British army under Sir Ralph Abercrombie, who was killed in making good his landing in March 1801, were compelled to capitulate and return to France in June in the same year. Thus the English remained masters at sea, the French by land; each nation had pushed its advantages to the utmost; and this state of equilibrium and uncertainty what farther to attempt, if not an argument for peace (considering the objects at stake and the irritation of political feeling), was at least a favourable opportunity for taking breath and collecting all their strength for the meditated blow, before this unnatural struggle was renewed to the complete triumph or absolute destruction of one or the other party. France fought for its own existence, or for the continuance of the new order of things, and in this object it had triumphed; England fought confessedly (or with a purpose, if only darkly avowed, not the less fixed and rooted) for the re-establishment of the ancient order of things, or of what was called social order, which could not be effected without the total subjection of France. In this object it had failed; and therefore it was easy to foresee (according to the common course of events and operations of men's passions) on which side the temptation with the watchful desire to renew the contest would lie—on theirs who had secured the object for which they took up arms, or on theirs who had been baffled in their attempts to dictate a government to another country on the plea of just and necessary defence, which plea could never be wanting while a hope remained or an opportunity offered for overturning the independence and government of the rival state. There was time enough for bringing this great and mighty question to an issue; and there was no danger that the motives for recurring to it would

cease with intermission or reflection. The sense of disappointed revenge does not rankle less in the breast of monarchs for being long brooded over; and peace or war is always in their own hands. It is easy to make or find the pretexts. Besides, new ones were wanted, the old ones not only having failed of success, but being the least palatable possible. The Peace of Amiens, therefore, was acceded to after some reluctance and "face-making," not to prevent future animosities and effect a true reconciliation, but it was a sponge to wipe out old scores and begin the game over again on a new ground. Some threats were indeed thrown out, and some preparations were made after the evacuation of Egypt for an invasion of England; but these were neither serious nor formidable, and ended in nothing but Lord Nelson's scouring the Channel, so that not an enemy's fishing-boat could appear in it, and blockading the French flotilla in the harbour of Boulogne. The preliminaries of peace were signed on the 10th of October, 1801, to the general joy of the people of Great Britain; but so much did the swallowing of this bitter pill go against the stomach of the higher authorities, that it took five months, till the March of the following year, to adjust the particulars of the treaty. Mr. Pitt went out of office on the occasion, and Mr. Addington succeeded to keep his place warm for him on his return to it. The colonies which the English had taken during the war (which was all they had got by it) were for the most part restored; Malta was to be given up under a general guarantee to the Knights of St. John; and it was the refusal to comply with this stipulation that was the immediate cause of the renewal of the war a twelvemonth after. To resume the account of one or two other points.

Buonaparte soon after his accession to the management of affairs, proposed to strike from the list of emigrants all but those who had held an important rank or taken a distinguished part in foreign armies or in the bands of insurgent royalists; or those among



the clergy who refused to take the oaths of allegiance to the government. In consequence they presented themselves in crowds and of all classes, and nearly all the members of the First Constituent Assembly, who had fled, returned to France. During the absence of the First Consul in Italy, at the time of the battle of Marengo, Cambacères had gone beyond his instructions in enlarging the list of exceptions: on his return Napoleon found among the number of those who were allowed to come back, several great names that had borne arms against France. He testified considerable dissatisfaction and chagrin at this. He consulted with Berlier whether these erasures could not be recalled, as having been procured by false certificates of civism. "There are five or six thousand emigrants," he said, "whom it is at all events necessary to prevent from returning to the country to trouble its repose, unless they pass over our dead bodies. But out of a hundred thousand persons wandering in exile, the most dangerous and hostile have contrived to return because they could afford to bribe the police; a duke could get himself struck off the list, while a poor man remained on it."\* On

\* The immense number of letters which were addressed to the First Consul, is scarcely conceivable; and among the rest was one from Durosél Beaumanoir, an emigrant, who had fled to Jersey. It contains some interesting particulars relative to Buonaparte's family, and is dated Jersey, 12th July, 1800.

"I trust, general, that I may, without indiscretion, intrude upon your notice, to remind you of what, I flatter myself, you have not totally forgotten, after having lived eighteen or nineteen years at Ajaccio. But you will, perhaps, be surprised that so trifling an affair should be the subject of the letter which I have the honour to address to you. You cannot have forgotten, general, that when your late father was obliged to take your brothers from the college of Autun, from whence he went to see you at Brienne, he was unprovided with money, and he asked me for twenty-five louis, which I lent him with pleasure. After his return he had not an opportunity of paying me, and when I left Ajaccio your mother offered to dispose of some plate in order to pay the debt. To this I objected, and told her that I would wait until she could pay me at her convenience, and, previous to the breaking out of the revolution, I believe it was not in her power to fulfil her wish of discharging the debt.

"I am sorry, general, to be obliged to trouble you about such a

an objection being made to the unpopularity of some part of the laws respecting emigration, the First Consul replied, "What signifies the opinion of the saloons and busybodies? There is only one opinion that I care for, that of the common peasants." Not long after, to show the temper and views of the class of persons thus readmitted (as it were on their *parole*) to the bosom of their country, Buonaparte was at the theatre to witness a play called "Edward in Scotland," in which the emigrants and royalists made constant applications of different passages to the Bourbons, and found a parallel between the consular government and the succession of the House of Hanover; and it was observed that the most violent and continued interruption proceeded from a box directly opposite the First Consul's belonging to the Duke of Choiseul, one of the emigrants who had been shipwrecked at Calais some years before, and whom Buonaparte had released from prison. The piece was suppressed, and the emigrants and royalists exclaimed bitterly against the tyranny of the First Consul.\* Such were the difficulties and straits to which he was reduced by the

trifle. But such is my unfortunate situation, that even this trifle is of some importance to me. Driven from my country, and obliged to take refuge in this island, where everything is exceedingly expensive, the little sum I have mentioned, which was formerly a matter of indifference, would now be of great service to me.

"At the age of eighty-six, general, after having served my country for sixty years, without interruption, I am compelled to take refuge here, and to subsist on a scanty allowance granted by the English government to French emigrants; I say emigrants, for I am obliged to be one against my will."

This letter was read to the First Consul, who immediately said, "Bourrienne, this is sacred! Do not lose a minute. Send the old man ten times the sum. Write to General Durosel, that he shall be immediately erased from the list of emigrants. What mischief those brigands of the convention have done! I can never repair it all." Buonaparte uttered these words with a degree of emotion which I rarely saw him evince. In the evening he asked me whether I had executed his orders, and I said I had done so immediately.—*Bourrienne*.

\* Dupatel, the author of a piece called "The Three Valets," and which was erroneously supposed to reflect on the three Consuls, had every amends made him by Napoleon for the first ebullition of his resentment as soon as the mistake was discovered.

attempt to reconcile different prejudices and parties, the safety of the state with humanity towards individuals, the foundations of liberty with the exercise of power. It would have been easy for Buonaparte to have lent himself to either extreme of old prejudices or new principles, but to combine and hold the balance between them was not so easy. He might have brought back the Bourbons or the revolutionary tribunals; or he might have permitted the uncontrolled liberty of the press, and been covered with the imputation of crimes like a leprosy; or have suppressed the police and laid his breast bare to the assassin's knife; or suffered the allies to overrun France without striking a blow; or have retired into private life with the *bonhomme* and self-denial of a simple citizen; and he would have pleased many people. But how to enforce authority in the midst of party rage without being accused of tyranny; how to repel the aggressions of all Europe without being railed at as a conqueror; how to secure the peace and tranquillity without infringing on the freedom of the country; how to conciliate religious scruples without bringing back the spirit of intolerance and superstition; how to avail himself of powerful interests and great bodies in the state without attacking liberal institutions and the rights of all; these were problems which it was beyond the power of the strictest logic or the giddiest romance to answer. Had he tried to hold the balance less even between the conflicting interests, or had he inclined, whenever there was a doubt, to the right instead of the expedient, I do not say he would have succeeded better, but I think he would have deserved to succeed better. Being himself new, he should have taken his stand on what was new; and all public acts and institutions having a prospective operation, instead of cleaving to antiquity, should make an advance to futurity, for that is the direction in which the world moves, not backwards but forwards. Or what was temporary, and arising out of actual emergencies, might have been arbitrary; what

was permanent ought to have been just and liberal. It is not true, however, that he owed his ruin to his running counter to the liberal maxims and spirit of the age ; these, indeed, failed him when he needed their support, and they his ;—had he appealed to them sooner, they would perhaps have sooner betrayed or compromised him by their imbecility or violence. The only obstacle he found fatal or insurmountable was the besotted bigotry of Spain, or the barbarous attachment of the Russians to the soil on which they are serfs. It will hardly be insisted that the opposition of England would have been disarmed by his making nearer approaches to the standard of modern philosophy. He himself said, that “it had been wished for him to have been a Washington ; but that had Washington been in his place, surrounded with discord within and invasion without, he would have defied him to have done as he did.” In the discussions of the council of state, Cambacères was considered as representing the opinions of the old aristocracy, Lebrun those of the modern republicans : Buonaparte was called the *consolidated third* ; and in acting as umpire between the two and listening to their arguments, had not the less difficulty in mastering both.

The Concordat, though a favourite and long-meditated scheme, was attended with many difficulties in the execution and unpleasant consequences in the sequel. After the battle of Marengo, Napoleon had ordered Murat, who had marched against the Neapolitan troops, to spare Rome, and had restored his temporal dominions to the Pope ; in return for which he was to give to France her old religion and a new sovereign. The treaty was signed the 18th of September, 1801. A proclamation of the consuls notified the re-establishment of the Catholic worship some time after ; and on Easter Sunday (1802), the new ordinance was solemnly carried into effect at Paris. All the great bodies of the state, the civil authorities, and the consuls repaired with great pomp and ceremony to the church of Notre-Dame. As a proof how

little regular progress had been made in etiquette, there were still several hackney-coaches in the procession. It was on this occasion, for the first time, that the household of the First Consul put on livery. An invitation had been addressed to the public functionaries and members of the diplomatic body to follow the example. Mass was performed with pontifical magnificence by Cardinal Caprara. The new bishops took the oath of allegiance to the Republic. After a discourse delivered by M. de Boisgelin, Archbishop of Tours (the same who had preached the sermon on the coronation of Louis XVI.) a *Te Deum* for the general peace and the re-establishment of the church concluded this religious ceremony, with which every kind of military pomp was mingled, and which was announced to the capital in the morning by discharges of artillery. At night there was an illumination and concert in the garden of the Tuileries. The peace of Amiens and the Concordat became the favourite subjects of the French artists. The Exhibition of that year was resplendent with allegorical cars of victory and triumphal arches of peace, as fine and as evanescent as the rainbow !

The military had a great repugnance to the new arrangement, and there was some art used in getting them to attend the ceremony at Notre-Dame. Berthier invited the principal to breakfast with him, whence he took them to the First Consul's levee, so that they could not excuse themselves from accompanying him. On their return, Buonaparte asked Delmas what he thought of the ceremony? He replied, "It was an admirable *capucinade*. All that was wanting to complete it was a million of men who have sacrificed their lives to overturn what you are trying to re-establish!" This sarcasm did not go unpunished. Rapp, who was privileged to say what he pleased, being asked if he should go to mass, answered the First Consul in the negative ; but added he had no objection to the priests, "provided he did not make them his aides-de-camp or his cooks." In fact, from

the little esteem in which they are held, the French priests to this day look like fellows who have stolen something. In Italy, they have none of this dejected, sneaking look ! After the Concordat the decade was regularly exchanged for the week, and the public offices were shut on Sundays. The adoption of the new system cost Napoleon more uneasiness and trouble than was suspected. The refractory priests gave themselves great airs upon it ; the Pope became more untractable than before. The clergy were constantly urging claims inconsistent with the existing laws and manners of society ; and with any other man than Buonaparte, would certainly have resumed their ancient preponderance or brought new calamities on themselves. Scandalous scenes ensued. The curate of the church of St. Roch having refused to read the funeral service over the remains of a Mademoiselle Chameroi, an opera-dancer, the populace were near stoning him ; and Monge said dryly, "It was a dispute of one set of actors against another." The First Consul put a stop to these proceedings ; but was it possible to suppress the spirit in which they originated, and which lurked under the cowl and surplice, like the plague in tainted robes ?

The affairs of St. Domingo were another rock on which this double policy split. What was he to make of that gigantic group of black heads ranged round the standard of revolt ? Was he to proclaim their unqualified enfranchisement and natural independence, and to extend to them all the benefits of the Declaration of Rights, in disregard of circumstances and consequences ? This cosmopolite philanthropy would be contrary to all his maxims and principles of government. Was he to resolve on their absolute subjugation or indiscriminate slaughter ? This would be equally repugnant to humanity and prudence. What then was he to do ? After considering whether he could not play off the men of colour against them (like chessmen on a board) he resolved with great justice and moderation to adopt a middle course,

that is, to maintain the system which Toussaint-L'Ouverture had established, to disarm the men of colour, to extend Toussaint's authority over the whole colony, to appoint him commander-in-chief of St. Domingo, and to confirm his regulations respecting the civil liberty and voluntary labour of the blacks. All now went on well for two years (1800 and 1801). But Toussaint himself defeated the friendly intentions of the First Consul, and the prospects of his countrymen, instigated, according to Buonaparte, by the English, who foresaw the ruin of their own system, should the blacks restrain themselves within the bounds of moderation and propriety in submission to the mother-country. Toussaint threw off his dependence, and set up for himself. It is curious to hear Buonaparte's complaints on this occasion. He says, "To give an idea of the indignation which the First Consul must have felt, it may suffice to mention that Toussaint not only assumed authority over the colony during his life, but invested himself with the right of naming his successor; and pretended to hold his authority, not from the mother-country, but from a *soi-disant* colonial assembly which he had created." Recourse was, therefore, had to the former scheme of joining with the men of colour against the blacks, and General Le Clerc was sent out with a considerable armament for this purpose. The expedition was at first successful, and Toussaint surrendered himself, and was suffered to remain in the island; but being afterwards detected in a clandestine correspondence with the English, he was seized and sent a prisoner to France, where he died in consequence of his confinement. The war after his departure broke out afresh; the most shocking excesses were committed on both sides; and Le Clerc, with a great part of his troops, having fallen victims to the yellow fever, the negroes remained in possession of the government of the island. To show the severity of Buonaparte's character in public affairs, he compelled his sister Pauline (the wife of General Le Clerc) to accompany him on this

hazardous expedition, in order to lessen the dread which was entertained of it. The behaviour of Buonaparte to the colonists has been violently censured both by friends and foes. His conduct was not certainly modelled on the maxim—*Fiat justitia, ruat cælum*; it was not that of a romantic and impassioned enthusiast in the cause of negro emancipation; neither was it (as has been pretended) that of a fiend, but a great deal too much of an ordinary statesman and man of the world. His detractors might learn, with a little self-reflection, from their censures of him to form a juster estimate of their own idols: The worst of his actions are only on a par (a degrading one, I own) with the best of theirs. A similar treatment of a revolted colony of ours would make a brilliant episode in the life of a Lord Melville or a Lord Bathurst. Buonaparte at first showed every consideration for the blacks; and he only grew moody and exasperated when he found her chief colony torn from France and in danger of being thrown into the hands of England. His jealousy on that head instantly turned the scale. Alas! the way to outstrip us would have been in the race of generosity and magnanimity, and not by trying to be foremost in that selfish policy or unfeeling cruelty! The death of Toussaint-L'Ouverture was one of those topics on which the tropes and figures of political rhetoric at one time delighted to dwell. As it took place in a castle in Franche-Comté and not in the streets of London, no one could say how it had happened; dark hints were thrown out, and it became a painful mystery, over which imagination drew its worst colours, and malice and prejudice left no doubt of the truth! After so many stories of the kind have been proved to be equally groundless and improbable, one might suppose that this would have been discarded with the rest, as a lawyer flings up a shameless brief; but there are some minds that seem eaten up with the measles of servility, and whom neither the height of genius nor universal fame can



raise above that low pitch of moral thinking that is to be found at the second tables of the great. Buonaparte had some qualms on the subject of making the blacks of St. Domingo free, and leaving those of Martinique and other islands in slavery, which inconsequentiality he proposes to remedy by a law declaring that "the blacks shall be slaves at Martinique and at the Isles of France and Bourbon ; and they shall be free at St. Domingo, Guadaloupe, and Cayenne:" as if this geographical separation could stifle the pulse of liberty when it had once begun to beat, or the fitness of the blacks for slavery or freedom could be dependent on positive enactments. Napoleon labours hard at the point of amalgamating the blacks and the whites by the medium of polygamy, and states that he had held several conferences with theologians on the subject. But this expedient would degrade marriage instead of raising the blacks, as long as the whites continued masters at home. Would Buonaparte marry a French princess to a black chieftain? No : but till then, his system would have no relation to the polygamy of the East.

The establishment of the Polytechnic and other schools on the most extensive and best-digested plans, carried instruction and improvement to every part of France. Buonaparte boasts of his munificence and exertions in this respect, and justly remarks that none but a bad government need fear the information of the people. He merely strove to keep the direction of this powerful engine of public opinion (by giving to the government the choice and payment of the teachers) as much as possible in his own hands:—if he had not, there were plenty of other hands into which it would soon have fallen. The *Institute* had been founded by the Convention ; and contained nearly all the talent and science of France. Some surviving members of the old French Academy, who regarded themselves as the fine gentlemen of letters and affected to look upon the Institute as a society of mechanics and revolutionists, undertook to set up an opposition

to the latter under the auspices of Lucien Buonaparte, who was partial to this sort of pedantry and tinsel, during the absence of his brother at Marengo; but soon after, the lofty pretensions of the academicians were quashed, and they were admitted as the second class of the Institute. In France science was associated with the period of the revolution, as poetry and the *belles lettres* were referred to the age of Louis XIV. In England, on the contrary, science is patronised in the fashionable circles as *proving nothing*; while elegant literature and the study of *humanity* are studiously banished from, or barely tolerated, in our polite lecture-rooms, whatever appeals to sentiment and imagination being thought dangerous. The fine arts were courted and encouraged under the Consulate. Admired pictures were purchased by the government; and distinguished or promising young artists had splendid apartments assigned them in the Louvre. A colossal bronze statue of Nicolas Poussin was cast in compliment to French art. Josephine had a real taste and relish for works of art, which her husband had not; but whenever she contrived to procure any precious *chef d'œuvre* for her private collection, Buonaparte said he felt himself robbed of it, because it no longer belonged to the public and to France. To show his sense of the value of men of genius, he declared at a later period that had Corneille lived in his time he would have made him a prince. He did not disdain to be the personal friend of Talma; nor did Talma ever repay this distinction with ingratitude or baseness. Equal attention and encouragement were given to the fine and the mechanic arts, to agriculture, manufactures, and commerce. In considering the relative value of the three last, Napoleon gave the precedence to agriculture, which raises the means of subsistence; second, to manufactures or handicrafts, which produce the conveniences and ornaments of life; third, to commerce, which exchanges what is superfluous for what is deficient in these. With respect to foreign commerce, he decided, with

his usual keen and comprehensive glance, in favour of the principles of free trade against monopolies. The correctness and soundness of his views are indeed acknowledged on all hands, with the sole exception of what related to his own personal power and ambition; but there, it should be remembered, others did not leave him a free choice. Bridges were constructed, roads were laid out, canals dug, which extended the inland navigation from the south to the north of France, from Marseilles to Amsterdam, harbours scooped out or secured, forests planted, new products in cultivation imported, the breed of different kinds of cattle improved. The roads over Mont Cenis and the Simplon were projected and begun, the noblest ever executed by the hand of man; and public monuments, buildings, and embellishments were scattered through the capital and the principal towns of France with a prodigal and benevolent hand. The finances were at the same time kept in the greatest order; public speculators and jobbers were discountenanced and punished; every general plan, almost every individual detail, was submitted to Buonaparte's immediate notice; and in his own household the strictest economy was combined with the utmost magnificence. He examined the accounts, kept an eye on the purveyors; and, descending to the minutest details, was like some other princes who have nothing else to do, his own butler, steward, and upholsterer. On one occasion, thinking the charge for some silk-hangings with gold buttons extravagant, he took one of the buttons in his pocket and walked out into one of the streets in Paris to ask the price of it. The affairs of Europe, the army, the police, the administration of justice, prisons, the press, public works, were all under his constant inspection and control. Often, after labouring all day in overlooking papers or comparing plans, dispatches came, and he sat up all night to read and answer them. His secretaries were worn out with the fatigue. He himself went through all this accumulation of labour with so little effort and

so little need of any stimulus but the importunate activity of his own mind, that he used at this period of his life to take nothing but lemonade. The universal authority which he thus exerted, and of which no other person was capable, he wished to concentrate more and more within himself, and to make the portentous responsibility hereditary. The only fault of all that he did for France was, that though it received the sanction of the general opinion, it emanated almost solely from himself, and there was no provision to check the abuse of discretionary power or to secure the continuance of its beneficial tendency. To be sure, there was no danger that the pride in creating should be joined with rapacity in appropriating; and a score of well-informed men, who were Buonaparte's confidential advisers in all cases and who had risen from the people, might be supposed in the immediate circumstances to represent the people, as a bucket of water taken from the ocean is the same everywhere. There were at this time no distinct classes with peculiar advantages and privileges, always prepared to vindicate their own rights, and to impede the public good. Buonaparte clearly identified the fortunes, well-being, and glory of France with his own; and it was only by straining the point to the utmost (and by chance) that the bubble burst and relieved the world from paying the penalty of the full chastisement they had so richly merited.

What Buonaparte himself laid the most stress on, and regarded as the sheet-anchor of his fame, was his code of laws. This was a work of great labour, judgment, and utility. It reduced the chaos of the ancient, contradictory, and arbitrary laws of France into one just and simple plan. Mr. Landor, though a declared enemy of Buonaparte, owns that he has left the best system of laws in Europe. The gainer of so many laurels surprised those about him more by his insight into jurisprudence than he had done by his knowledge of government or his achievements in war. His coadjutors in preparing and framing the *Code Napoléon*

were Tronchet, Roederer, Portalis, Thibaudeau, and others. The First Consul presided at the greater number of the meetings of the council of state where the subject was debated, and took a very active part in the discussions, which he himself provoked, sustained, directed, and re-animated. Unlike certain orators of his council, he did not seek to shine by the roundness of his periods, the choice of his expressions, or the mode of his delivery. He spoke without preparation, without embarrassment or pretension, with the freedom and ease of conversation, growing warmer with the effects of opposition and the development of various ideas on the subject. He was inferior to none of the council ; he was equal to the ablest of them in the readiness with which he seized on the point of the question, in the justness of his remarks, and the force of his reasonings. He surpassed them all in the happiness and originality of his expressions. Many persons pretended to believe (for mankind like to resolve the great into the little) that Loéré, the secretary, had given a certain colouring to the style, but it is shown in the admirable "Memoirs of the Consulate," by Thibaudeau, that he uniformly weakened and impaired it. The First Consul was as frank and candid as he was strong in debate. "It is important," he said, "that what men like the citizen\* Tronchet say should be accurately reported, for it will carry an authority with it. As to us, men of the sword or finance, who are not jurists, it signifies little what we think. I have said things in the heat of discussion of which I have seen the error a quarter of an hour afterwards ; but *I do not wish to pass for better than I am.*" Napoleon thus characterised some of his fellow-labourers in the Council. "Tronchet is a man possessed of a vast fund of information and an extremely sound judgment for his age. I find Roederer feeble. Portalis would be

\* This term had not lost its value at the time. One of the most animated alterations in the tribunate was in consequence of the substitution of the term *subjects* for that of *citizens*, in the treaty with Russia some time before.

the most imposing and eloquent speaker, if he knew when to have done. Thibaudeau is not adapted for this kind of discussion; like Lucien, he requires the tribune, where he can give himself full scope. Cambacères is the advocate-general; he states both sides. The most difficult of all is the summing up, but in this Lebrun leaves every one behind."

We have a striking account of what passed in the interior of the Tuileries, and of Buonaparte's own mind on the two great points of his advancement to power and the renewal of the war, in the same authentic and impartial work. The particulars are too important and characteristic to be omitted here. Josephine appears to have been kept in continual alarm by the projects in agitation respecting the establishment of hereditary succession and her own divorce as connected with it. As far back as the explosion of the infernal machine, she said to Roederer, who was attacking Fouché, "Those are Buonaparte's worst enemies who wish to inspire him with ideas of hereditary succession and divorce." On the appointment of Buonaparte Consul for life with the power of naming his successor (10th August, 1802) the following conversation took place on the subject at Malmaison, whither the counsellor of state N—— had gone on particular business.

*The First Consul.* "Well, what is there new at Paris?" N. "Nothing that you do not know." B. "What is it they say?" N. "They talk much of the decree of the senate." B. "Aye: and what is the general opinion?" N. "Some are for, others are against it." B. "And what is your own opinion?" N. "It is a question tried and judged." B. "And lost. Is it not so?" N. "It is not difficult for you to guess my meaning." B. "I do not find fault with you for it; I know you are an honest man. But, my good friend, you will be cured of your reveries: we cannot go on as we have done. France will not be the less free, and she will be the first power." N. "Do you think, then, that a decree of the senate and

a vote of the people\* are such sure guarantees, and that you could not have remained Consul without it?" B. "I am aware that it is a feeble security for the interior; but it has a good effect on foreign states. I am from this moment on a level with other sovereigns; for by a just reckoning they are only what they are for life. *They and their ministers will respect me more.* It is not fit that the authority of a man who takes the lead in the affairs of Europe should be precarious, or should at least seem so."† N. "The opinion of foreigners is of much less importance than that of France." B. "With the exception of a few madmen who only wish for disorder, and of some well-meaning enthusiasts who dream of the republic of Sparta, France is desirous of stability and strength in the government." N. "There is a greater number of persons than you think, who dream not of the republic of Sparta, but of the French Republic. The impression of the Revolution is still quite fresh, and the transition to another order of things and ideas somewhat sudden." B. "The men of the Revolution have nothing to fear; I am their best guarantee." N. "What will become of the men when the thing shall have ceased to exist?" . . . Then passing to the subject of the designation of his successor, he approved, or pretended to approve, of N.'s opposition to the measure, who observed that four or five of them had looked upon it in the light of an alienation of the sovereignty of the people. B. (interrupting him warmly) "It was Rœderer who officiously brought forward this question. When I was told what had passed, I said, 'Who is it you would have me choose? One of my brothers?' The nation has indeed consented to be governed by me, because I had acquired

\* The people had voted for the Consulship for life by a majority of three millions to a few hundred discontented voices. Carnot had protested against it; and La Fayette had only consented to it, on condition that the First Consul would allow the liberty of the press.

† This seems a fair practical answer to the doubt of stability in Lord Grenville's Note.

a high degree of glory and rendered it signal services: but it will say that it has not for that reason sold itself to my family. As to my successor, I know no one who has the necessary qualifications, and whom the nation would approve. Is it Joseph or Lucien who was supposed to have urged this measure?" *N.* "Lucien, and that excited some apprehension; in short, the expectation of I know not what changes spreads inquietude and alarm everywhere." *B.* "What would you have? I hear a talk of guarantees for the nation, of great bodies composed of the great proprietors for life, or even hereditary." *N.* "This is the fourth constitution in twelve years; if we change this, where shall we stop?" *B.* "It is better to environ the one we have with proper consideration. And as to these grand corps that they talk of, what would they turn out when we had chosen them? Something quite different from what was proposed. They are the men of '91, who wish to come in under this imposing designation, Roederer, Mounier, La Fayette, Latour-Maubourg, and all the rest. Judge now, what we could expect from these men, who are always mounted on their metaphysics of '89. The two last have written to me to say that they would give their assent to the Consulship for life, on the condition that I would re-establish the liberty of the press. The liberty of the press, indeed! I should no sooner have established it than I should have thirty royalist journals and a proportionable number of Jacobin ones start up against me. I should have to govern once more with a minority, a faction, and to recommence the Revolution, while all my efforts have been directed to govern with the nation. And then, again, the opinion of these *Messieurs*, these grand proprietaries, would be against the Revolution; they have all of them suffered more or less by it, and hold it and all that belongs to it in horror. See, I have at this moment in my hands a memorial from six sugar-refiners. Well! *a-propos* of sugar, it is nothing but a continued diatribe against the Revolu-



tion, by which they think to pay their court to me. Suppose, then, I have to propose to these grand corps thus constituted, a conscription, contributions; they will resist, they will allege the interests of the people. Let me stand in need of strong measures in difficult circumstances; they will be alarmed, they will abandon me through pusillanimity. If I provoke an opposition on revolutionary principles, the nation will not trouble itself about it. Let these grand corps organise a counter-revolutionary opposition, and they will carry a good part of the nation with them. It is indispensable that the government should remain in the hands of the men of the Revolution; that is their only chance. In a word, these gentlemen would cry out against the arbitrary conduct of government, and not leave me a single minister. As it is, I do not mind them. Not that a government is to be unjust, but it cannot avoid some arbitrary acts. I have two hundred Chouans detained in prison; were I to have them brought to trial, they would be acquitted." *N.* "You may believe that I enter into all you have said on this last question. I do not justify all the men of the Revolution; I speak of them in a mass; and it is only they who can defend their own work and the change which it has produced in the ideas of France and Europe. It is none but they who are your true friends; for you are theirs, and their surest safeguard. As to the privileged classes, they are irreconcilable. They will accept of places, they ask nothing better; they will dissemble, bend, and crouch, it is their trade; but let a catastrophe approach, they will come out in their natural colours, and will sacrifice you to their ancient idols. They will never really regard you as one of themselves." *B.* "I know it well; these persons and the foreign cabinets hate me worse than Robespierre." *N.* "With respect to national guarantees, I can understand but one—a good representative system, by which the public wants and public opinion may be fully manifested, so as to direct, without weakening, the action of the govern-

ment. With this the rest would come in time." *B.* "Siéyes spoilt all with his ridiculous constitutions; I let him have his way too much. You will let me hear your further ideas." *N.* "If I am allowed to be frank." *B.* "That is understood without a word said."

Really in these circumstances, with this inertness in the people, with this proneness to defection in the chiefs, surrounded by flatterers, forced on by the allies, with his good sword and his ambition to carve out his way for him, though I might wish that another course had been pursued, yet I do not see how it could be hoped; and I and others who have not bowed the knee to idols, nor eaten of the unclean thing, have this at least to thank him for—that for fifteen years, if he did not restore the vital spirit of liberty, he turned its tomb into a citadel to keep its old and deadly foes from insulting over its corse, and by being a scourge and a terror to tyrants, could not but save the principle of the Revolution, while he saved himself.

While these discussions were pending, Josephine fluttered about, trembling with apprehension, listening to every breath, and uttering her dissatisfaction and doubts to all whom she could interest in her behalf. She seemed to shrink instinctively from this new and pathless career, of which she only saw the danger, held Buonaparte back from it as from the edge of a precipice, and might be thought to have foreseen the time when she and her daughter would each have to lean on the arm of the Emperor Alexander, while her *Cid* (hers once more in misfortune) was led away by barbarous and ruthless foes. She ran to meet *N*—as soon as he retired from his audience with Buonaparte, took him to walk with her in the park, and looking anxiously round, began to complain bitterly of Lucien, Talleyrand, and others. Shortly after, she renewed the conversation. "Be sure," she said, "they have not given up their project of hereditary succession, and that it will take place sooner or later. They are desirous that the First Consul should have

offspring, by no matter whom, and that I should afterwards adopt it; for they are sensible how much Buonaparte would do himself wrong, were he to put away a wife who was attached to him at a time when he was without power, and to whose daughter he has married his brother. But never, I have told them, would I lend myself to such infamy.\* Besides, it is a mistake to imagine the people would allow a spurious offspring to succeed. I cannot help thinking that in that case Lucien would try to enforce his preten-

\* To lessen the influence which Josephine possessed from the love of her husband, more than one of his brothers endeavoured to excite his jealousy; and they so far succeeded, that previously to his departure for his expedition in Egypt, his distrust of her had shown itself on several occasions. He nevertheless continued passionately fond of her. To enjoy the pleasure of her society up to the last moment, he took her with him to Toulon, and nothing could be more affecting than their parting.

While Napoleon was at Cairo, his jealousy was again powerfully excited by the reports of Junot, who had received from Paris positive accounts of Josephine's coquetry. "I know not what I would give," he said, "if what Junot has been telling me should be untrue, so greatly do I love that woman. If Josephine be really guilty, a divorce shall separate us for ever. I will not submit to be the laughing-stock of the imbeciles of Paris. I will write to Josephine." He accordingly did write a long epistle to her: but the letter, instead of reaching its destination, was intercepted by the British fleet under the command of Nelson. The following quotation from it shows the agitated state of Napoleon's mind at this time: "I think of being in France in two months. I recommend my interests to thee. I have much, much domestic chagrin: for the veil is entirely removed. Thou only remainest to me on earth: thy friendship is very dear to me. To make me a mere misanthrope nothing more is wanting but to lose thee, and see thee betray me. It is my sad position to have at the same time all the sentiments for the same person in my heart. Thou understandest me! Arrange it so that I may have a country seat on my arrival, either in the neighbourhood of Paris or in Burgundy. I reckon on passing the winter there, and shutting myself up. I am weary of human nature! I have need of solitude and retirement. Grandeur is irksome: feeling is dried up: glory is insipid: at nine-and-twenty years of age I have exhausted everything: it only remains for me to become in sad sincerity a creature wrapt up in selfishness. Adieu, my only friend! I have never been unjust towards thee! Thou understandest me!"

On Napoleon's return to France in October, 1799, he received Josephine with studied severity, and an air of cold indifference; but after three days of conjugal misunderstanding, a complete reconciliation was brought about, and from that hour their happiness was never disturbed by a similar cause.—*O'Meara*.

sions. They will begin by doing all they can to alienate Buonaparte from me. They have hinted at a handsome allowance, if he were to divorce me ; but I replied, that if that were to happen, I would take nothing from him. I would dispose of my diamonds and purchase a country-house, where I could live happily enough, would they only let me do so. It is only within these few days that poor Hortense has felt some slight illness, though she is in her ninth month ; I trembled at the thought, in consequence of the infamous reports which have been spread abroad. When I said so to Buonaparte, he replied, 'These rumours have been credited by the public only because the nation wished me to have a child.' I told him he deceived himself greatly, if he supposed these stories had any such motive, and that it was his enemies who circulated such calumnies. But this answer of Buonaparte's will let you see what are his intentions, and the blindness in which he is plunged by his schemes of grandeur. He is more feeble and more easily led than people believe ; for it is not possible to account in any other way for the influence which Lucien exercises over him. He is acquainted with all that Lucien has said and written about him, and yet he suffers himself to be guided by him. To see him at home in his family one would say he was a good man, and in fact he is so. Fortunately he has a strong sense of justice, since without that they would make him do much worse things. He one day asked me : 'What are my faults ?' I replied, 'I know of two, want of firmness, and indiscretion ; you suffer yourself to be governed by those who seek only your ruin, and are so fond of disputing that you divulge your secrets.' He folded me in his arms, and owned that it was true. When I point out to him the dangers of ambition, he answers, 'It is also on thy account and that of thy family, for if I were to die, thou wouldst be sacrificed !' But what a pity that a young man who possesses so many claims to glory and to the homage of his age and of posterity,

should be spoiled by flatteries!" Josephine was inclined, from her affection for her husband, to throw the blame on others; but no one is ruined but by his own connivance or from inevitable circumstances.\*

On the question of the duration of peace or probable renewal of hostilities, the following particulars are well worth giving, as throwing a new and intimate light on the views and dispositions of the First Consul.

"In England, the peace of Amiens, though popular, was in the opinion of politicians of all parties little better than a compulsory step, and consequently a mere truce, which could not last long. This conclusion resulted from all the discussions which took place in parliament, and from the countenance which the English ministry afforded to the clandestine intrigues kept up in London against the consular government. Had the First Consul himself entertained a different opinion of the peace of Amiens, he would not have been deserving of the high place which he held, nor of his great renown. He had made peace, not from necessity, but because the French people loudly called for it; because it was glorious to France, and because, on the part of her most inveterate enemy, it was a

\* Thibaudeau observes here, that "the ideas of the unity and stability of government were so much in vogue, that if they had dared, or if the First Consul had wished it, they would have heaped all power on his single head. The intriguers would have exploded every trace of democracy. They wished to concentrate all authority from that of the Consul for life, down to the mayor of the most obscure village, and to wean the attention of the citizens, by degrees, from public affairs, in order that in the end they might be altogether estranged from them. It was the fashion to cite the ancient *intendances* of provinces as models of administration, and the old parliaments as patterns for courts of justice. There was not a single institution, decried for its intolerable abuses, and proscribed by the voice of the nation, that did not then find apologists and defenders." How ridiculous and odious all this seems, *without* the plea of antiquity and the sanction of prejudice and tradition on its side! Our *wise-acres*, the declaimers against the exercise, but dupes of the principles of arbitrary power, thought it best, instead of letting any such patched-up system fall in pieces from sheer antipathy to itself, or when no longer supported by the hand that raised it without any warrant but his momentary will, to have it *grooved* in the rock of ages, and vested as a sacred right in a privileged race!

recognition of the form of government which she had chosen to adopt. In a conversation with one of his counsellors of state, Buonaparte expressed his opinion as follows:—

*The First Consul.* "Well, Citizen —, what think you of my peace with England?"

*Counsellor of State.* "I think, Citizen Consul, that it does much honour to your government, and gives great satisfaction to the French."

*First Consul.* "Do you think it will last long?"

*Counsellor.* "I should be very desirous for it to last four or five years, at least, to give us time to recruit our navy; but I doubt much whether it will extend to this period."

*First Consul.* "I do not believe it neither. England fears us; the continental powers are hostile to us; how then, if so, hope for a solid peace? Moreover, do you imagine that a peace of five years or more would suit the form or the circumstances of our government?"

*Counsellor.* "I think that this repose would be very desirable for France, after ten years of war."

*First Consul.* "You do not comprehend me; I do not make it a question whether a sincere and solid peace is an advantage to a well-settled state; but I ask whether ours is sufficiently so, not to stand in need of further victories?"

*Counsellor.* "I have not reflected sufficiently on so important a question, to give a categorical answer; all that I can say, or rather what I feel, is that a state that can only maintain itself by war is most unfortunately circumstanced."

*First Consul.* "The greatest misfortune of all would be not to judge rightly of our position, for when we know what it is we may provide against it. Answer me, then, whether you do not apprehend the persevering hostility of these governments, which have nevertheless signed peace with us?"

*Counsellor.* "I should find it a hard matter not to distrust them."

*First Consul.* "Well, then, draw the consequence. If these governments always have war *in petto*, if they are determined to renew it one day, it is best that this should be sooner rather than later; since every day weakens the impression of their late defeats on their minds, and tends to diminish in us the confidence inspired by our late victories; thus all the advantage of delay is on their side."

*Counsellor.* "But, Citizen Consul, do you reckon as nothing the opportunity you will derive from the peace for the internal organization of the country?"

*First Consul.* "I was coming to that. Assuredly, this important consideration did not escape my attention; and I have given proofs, even in the midst of war, of my not neglecting what concerned the institutions and the prosperity of the interior. I shall not stop there, there is still much more to do; but is not military success even more necessary to dazzle and keep this interior in order? Be well assured that a First Consul has no resemblance to those kings by the grace of God, who regard their dominions as an inheritance. Their power has old habits to strengthen it; with us, on the contrary, all these old habits are stumbling-blocks. The French government, at the present moment, is like nothing that surrounds it. Hated by its neighbours, obliged to keep down various descriptions of malcontents in its own bosom, it has need, in order to overawe so many enemies, of brilliant achievements, and consequently of war."

*Counsellor.* "I own, Citizen Consul, that you have much more to do to establish your government than the kings, our neighbours, have to maintain theirs; but, on the one hand, Europe is convinced that you know how to conquer, and to recollect this truth, it is not necessary that you should furnish new proofs of it every year; on the other hand, the occupations of peace are not without their lustre too, and you will know how to rivet admiration by noble undertakings."

*First Consul.* "Former victories, seen at a distance, do not strike much; and the labours of art only

make a strong impression on those who witness them, which is the smallest number. My intention is to multiply and encourage these labours, posterity perhaps will make more account of them than of my victories; but for the present, there is nothing that carries such a sound with it as military successes. This is my conviction; it is the misfortune of our situation. A new government, such as ours, requires, I repeat it, to dazzle and astonish in order to maintain itself."

*Counsellor.* "Your government, Citizen Consul, is not quite, as it appears to me, a nursling. It has put on the manly robe since Marengo: directed by a powerful head and sustained by the arms of thirty millions of inhabitants, it holds a distinguished place among European governments."

*First Consul.* "Do you conceive, then, my good friend, that this is enough? No; it is necessary that *it should be the first of all or be overpowered.*"

*Counsellor.* "And to obtain this result, you see no other means than war?"

*First Consul.* "Yes, Citizen —, I will maintain peace if our neighbours are disposed to keep it; but should they oblige me to take up arms again before we are enervated by ease and a long inaction, I shall consider it as an advantage."

*Counsellor.* "Citizen Consul, what period do you then assign to this state of anxiety, which in the bosom even of peace should make us regret war?"

*First Consul.* "My friend, I am not sufficiently enlightened as to the future to reply to your question; but I feel that in order to hope for more solidity and good faith in treaties of peace, it is requisite either that the form of the surrounding governments should approximate nearer to ours, or that our political institutions should be a little more in harmony with theirs. There is always a spirit of animosity between old monarchies and a new republic. This is the root of our European discords."

*Counsellor.* "But cannot this hostile spirit be re-



pressed by the smart of recent recollections, or be arrested in its progress by the imposing attitude which you might assume?"

*First Consul.* "Palliatives are not cures; in our circumstances, I consider every peace as a short-lived truce, and the ten years of my Consulship as doomed to war almost without intermission. My successors will do as they can. [This was previous to his being chosen Consul for life.] As to the rest, be on your guard against believing that I wish to break off the peace; no, I shall not act the part of the aggressor. I have too strong an interest in leaving it to foreign powers to strike the first blow. I know them well: they will be the first to take up arms or to furnish me with just grounds to do so. I shall hold myself in readiness for all events."

*Counsellor.* "Thus, then, Citizen Consul, it appears that what I feared a few months ago is precisely what you wish."

*First Consul.* "I wait to see; and my principle is that war is to be preferred to an ephemeral peace: we shall see how this will turn out. At present it is of the utmost importance to us. It affixes its seal to the acknowledgment of my government by that power which has held out the longest against it. This is the chief point gained. The rest, that is, the future, must depend on circumstances."

According to this account, as it relates to the grounds of Buonaparte's foreign policy, the supposed hatred of kings to the principles of popular government has cost France and Europe dear. Whether that policy was sound and justifiable or not, depends on this other question whether that hatred was real or supposed; and this question does not, I think, admit of a doubt. To contend with any chance of success against the armed prejudice, pride, and power of Europe, something more than mere good-nature, moderation, and a belief in external professions was necessary: whatever might be the danger or the inconveniences on the opposite side, instead of fastidious

scruples or Quaker morality, it required the very genius of heroic daring and lofty ambition "clad all in proof," or a champion like Talus, the Iron Man in Spenser, to make head against it. Every one will allow that Buonaparte came up to these conditions: I am not very anxious to deny that he perhaps exceeded them. What I like least in the foregoing conversation is the hint thrown out of an approximation to the form of the old governments. "Farthest from them was best." It was too much to conquer and to imitate them too. But the one left an opening to the First Consul's schemes of personal aggrandisement as the other did of martial glory. The splendour with which he proposed to dazzle the enemies of the Republic, seemed already to contract his brows into a frown. Even this, though an unlooked-for and the least favourable issue to the question, was not without its moral use. A people were denied the right to be free and a mark set upon them as unworthy of the rank of men, and one man stepped forth from among them who wiped out the stain with his sword, and set his foot upon the necks of kings, and humbled their pride and pretensions with the dust by placing himself on an equality with them: a whole people were taunted with their incapacity to maintain the relations of peace and amity for want of a head, and they chose one man among them to lead them forth to universal conquest. This was at least one way of asserting the cause of the people, and of answering the claim of natural and indefeasible superiority over them. If not the triumph of the best principles, neither was it the complete and final triumph of the worst. In a battle, all those on the same side claim the honour of the victory, though the general has the greatest share: so freemen can hardly complain if to triumph over their unrelenting taskmasters they have to surrender the chief power into the hands of the ablest among them. As to France, it is at all events better to be stopped by a robber than sold for a slave; and as to the Continent, the war was never a national

quarrel, but a struggle between the different classes and races of men, whether one should be considered as an inferior order of beings to the other. If it were a question between the blacks and whites, the colour would at once decide the point; to the mind's eye the complexion of the dispute, the real gist of the argument is no less clear between the natural rights and the hereditary and lasting bondage of the people. Passion and power never lost sight of this distinction: reason was more easily staggered and thrown off its guard. There are some who think the slightest flaw, a single error fatal to their own side of the question as opposed to the pretended right to inflict every wrong with impunity: in my opinion this claim alone cancels a million of faults committed against it. Anything short of the re-admission of such a principle is virtually "deliverance to mankind." If, however, a nobler and wiser (because more consistent and disinterested) course lay open to Buonaparte, he did not want a Mentor in one who had every title to be so, both from his own obligations to him and from his well-known attachment to the cause of liberty. At the time of his being chosen Consul for life, La Fayette addressed the following letter to him:—

"La Grange, 1st of Prairial, year X (1802).

"GENERAL,

"When a man, penetrated with the gratitude that he owes you, and too sensible of glory not to sympathise with yours, has added restrictions to his suffrage, they are the less to be suspected, as no one will rejoice more than he to see you first magistrate for life of a free Republic. The 18th of Brumaire has saved France, and I found myself recalled by the liberal professions to which you had pledged your honour. We have seen since in the consular power that repairing system which under the auspices of your genius, has done such great things; less grand, however, than the restoration of liberty will be. It is impossible that you, General, the first of that order of beings,

who to appreciate themselves and to take their proper rank must embrace all ages, should wish that such a revolution, that so many victories with so much blood, so many misfortunes and prodigies should have for the world and for yourself no other result than an arbitrary government. The French nation has too well known its rights to have forgotten them entirely ; but perhaps it is more in a state at present, than in its first effervescence, to recover them effectually ; and you by the force of your character and the public confidence, by the superiority of your talents, of your situation, of your fortune, may, in re-establishing liberty, master all dangers, and allay all inquietudes. I should then have only patriotic and personal motives for wishing you in this view to succeed in establishing a permanent magistracy as an addition to your glory. But I owe it to the principles, the engagements, and to the actions of my whole life, to be assured, before I give it my vote, that it is founded on bases worthy of the nation and of yourself.

“ I trust you will be satisfied, General, on this as on former occasions, that with an adherence to my political opinions are joined sincere good wishes for your welfare, and a profound sense of my obligations to you.

“ Health and respect.

“ LA FAYETTE.”

Every day the irritation and dissatisfaction of the two governments that had just concluded peace became greater, the one trying to maintain its temper and a friendly appearance, the other to provoke an open rupture by every species of secret calumny or vulgar taunt. The English journals were filled with gross and studied insults to the person of the First Consul, and he complained that “ it was in vain for him to reckon upon peace, while every gale that blew breathed hatred and contempt from England.” In spite of all this, people still trusted to the continuance of peace, and the English flocked over in crowds to Paris. They had been debarred of

this privilege for nearly ten years, and they were devoured with eager curiosity to see the effects of the Revolution, as well as the extraordinary man whom victory had placed at the head of affairs. They expected to find the country exhausted, agriculture annihilated, and the people miserable. They were astonished and not a little scandalised at the national prosperity, the splendour of the capital, and the magnificence of the court. Paris was intoxicated with the presence of so many strangers. Every attention was paid them, every preference was given them. French vanity and politeness seemed to delight in soothing and flattering English pride and jealousy. The only question was, who should give them the most welcome reception: all Paris was on tiptoe to make a few thousand English eat, drink, dance, and look pleased. The women were prodigal of their fascinations; and the hospitality and courtesy, which were carried to a ridiculous excess, were repaid with characteristic sullenness and scorn—the English thinking there must be a design in so much ostentatious complaisance, and carrying back their personal obligations as an uneasy *make-weight* to throw into the scale of a new war! The summer of that year was, however, bright and serene; most of our countrymen who could afford it passed it under cloudless skies, and the hope of peace was a satisfaction to all. The thoughtless and the well-disposed believed firmly in its continuance because they wished it, as well as for the following reasons: 1. War is an unnatural state and cannot last for ever, so that the imagination always looks forward to and can only repose in the enjoyment of peace. 2. If war were a benefit and not a curse (as has been pretended before now) we should go to war with our friends, and not with our enemies. Therefore men's wishes point at peace if their passions do not disturb it. 3. The French had gained the object which was at stake—the acknowledgment of the Republic; and numbers of the English were more ashamed of the cause in which we had been

engaged than mortified at its want of success. The real grounds of the war were not the pretended ones, and could not be suspected except by those who were in the secret. And, lastly, it was believed that Buonaparte, who was the soul of the war, and who had put an end to it by the fame of his exploits, was both solicitous and qualified to reap an equal glory by the arts of peace.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

## RUPTURE OF THE PEACE OF AMIENS.

Account of the author's object in writing the life ; state of parties in England ; pretexts for the war ; interview of the First Consul with Lord Whitworth ; warlike speech from the throne to the British parliament ; Buonaparte complains to the ambassadors at Paris ; provocations offered to Buonaparte ; his address to the council of state ; his spirited speech after a diplomatic audience ; Lord Whitworth leaves Paris ; England declares war against France ; hollowness of the causes assigned.

OF my object in writing the LIFE here offered to the public, and of the general tone that pervades it, it may be proper that I should render some account (before proceeding farther) in order to prevent mistakes and false applications. It is true, I admired the man ; but what chiefly attached me to him, was his being, as he had been long ago designated, "the child and champion of the Revolution." Of this character he could not divest himself, even though he wished it. He was nothing, he could be nothing but what he owed to himself and to his triumphs over those who claimed mankind as their inheritance by a divine right ; and as long as he was *a thorn in the side of kings* and kept them at bay, his cause rose out of the ruins and defeat of their pride and hopes of revenge. He stood (and he alone stood) between them and their natural prey. He kept off that last indignity and wrong offered to a whole people (and through them to the rest of the world) of being handed over, like a herd of cattle, to a particular family, and chained to the foot of a legitimate throne. This was the chief point at issue—this was the great question, compared with which all others were tame

and insignificant—Whether mankind were, from the beginning to the end of time, born slaves or not? As long as he remained, his acts, his very existence, gave a proud and full answer to this question. As long as he interposed a barrier, a gauntlet, and an arm of steel between us and them who alone could set up the plea of old, indefeasible right over us, no increase of power could be too great that tended to shatter this claim to pieces: even his abuse of power and aping the style and title of the imaginary gods of the earth only laughed their pretensions the more to scorn. He did many things wrong and foolish; but they were individual acts, and recoiled upon the head of the doer. They stood upon the ground of their own merits, and could not urge in their vindication “the right divine of kings to govern wrong;” they were not precedents; they were not exempt from public censure or opinion; they were not softened by prescription, nor screened by prejudice, nor sanctioned by superstition, nor rendered formidable by a principle that imposed them as sacred obligations on all future generations: either they were state-necessities extorted by the circumstances of the time, or violent acts of the will, that carried their own condemnation in their bosom. Whatever fault might be found with them, they did not proceed upon the avowed principle, that “millions were made for one,” but one for millions; and as long as this distinction was kept in view, liberty was saved, and the Revolution was untouched; for it was to establish it that the Revolution was commenced, and to overturn it that the enemies of liberty waded through seas of blood, and at last succeeded. It is the practice of the partisans of the old school to cry *Vive le roi, quand même!* Why do not the people learn to imitate the example? Till they do, they will be sure to be foiled in the end by their adversaries, since half-measures and principles can never prevail against whole ones. In fact, Buonaparte was not strictly a free agent. He could hardly do otherwise than he did, ambition apart, and merely



to preserve himself and the country he ruled. France was in a state of siege; a citadel in which freedom had hoisted the flag of revolt against the threat of hereditary servitude; and that in the midst of distraction and convulsions, consequent on the sentence of ban and anathema passed upon it by the rest of Europe for having engaged in this noble struggle, required a military dictator to repress internal treachery and headstrong factions, and repel external force. Who, then, shall blame Buonaparte for having taken the reins of government, and held them with a tight hand? The English, who having set the example of liberty to the world, did all they could to stifle it? Or the continental sovereigns, who were only acquainted with its principles by their fear and hatred of them? Or the emigrants, traitors to the name of men as well as Frenchmen? Or the Jacobins, who made the tree of liberty spout nothing but blood? Or its *paper* advocates, who reduced it to a harmless theory? Or its true friends, who would sacrifice all for its sake? The last, who alone have the right to call him to a severe account, will not; for they know that, being but a handful or scattered, they had not the power to effect themselves what they might have recommended to him; and that there was but one alternative between him and that slavery, which kills both the bodies and the souls of men! There were two other feelings that influenced me on this subject; a love of glory, when it did not interfere with other things, and the wish to see personal merit prevail over external rank and circumstance. I felt pride (not envy) to think that there was one reputation in modern times equal to the ancients, and at seeing one man greater than the throne he sat upon.

The former war with France was put an end to, in the first place, because it was unsuccessful; and secondly, because it was unpopular with a considerable party in the nation, who were favourable to the French Revolution. Before embarking finally in a struggle

which was felt to be of vital importance, and which was meant to terminate only in the destruction of one or other of the contending powers, it was thought advisable to interpose a hollow peevish truce, which could be broken off at pleasure ; and which would give those who had hitherto disapproved the attempt to overturn the French Republic as an unprincipled aggression on the rights and liberties of mankind, but who were grown lukewarm in the cause, or were tired out with opposition, a plausible pretext to change sides, and to come over, with loud clamour and tardy repentance, to the views of their king and country. "It was a consummation devoutly to be wished"—None can tell how devoutly but those who have known what it is to suffer the privation of public sympathy, the constancy of the irritation, the fruitlessness of perseverance, the bar it is to business or pleasure, the handle it affords to enemies, the coldness it throws on friendship ; so that the first opening was eagerly caught at towards a reconciliation between the opposition and the government, the ardour of which (on one side at least) was in proportion to their long estrangement. The minority had thus redeemed their literal pledge of consistency in the original revolutionary quarrel, and might now join heart and hand in the new crusade against the encroachments and ambition of France. As long as the first war continued, they could not well do so without seeming to acknowledge themselves in the wrong ; but by making peace, the government ostensibly took this responsibility upon itself ; and with a new war, gave them the option of new opinions, so that they must in courtesy return the compliment by taking part against themselves. The peace of Amiens, therefore, just left a short interval or breathing-space, enough for this compromise of principle and marshalling of public opinion against the common enemy, upon distinct grounds indeed, but with the old grudge at bottom. The formal suspension of hostilities, however, and the commencing again on fresh and incidental causes of provocation gave immense

additional power to the government, and an *impetus* that carried it forward to the proposed end either of destruction or conquest; for it flung the whole practical weight of public opinion in England into the war-scale, without any drawback or diversion from contending parties or feelings. The feeble opposition that was left chiefly served to whet and sharpen, instead of blunting the edge of deadly animosity; and many of the new converts who had hurled up the red cap of liberty with most violence in the air, and whose suffrages it was an object to gain, were now foremost in raising the war-whoop and in cheering the combatants.

The British government and public at this period might be divided into three parties. The first and really preponderating party consisted of those who thought that no peace ought to be concluded with a regicide Republic; and that it was nothing short of national degradation and signing a bond of voluntary infamy to enter into truce or treaty with the traitors and miscreants who had usurped the reins of government in France, as much as with a den of robbers and murderers whom the laws of God and man made it equally a duty to pursue to extermination or unconditional surrender. This was the high Tory party, the school of Burke and Wyndham, and more particularly including the king's friends. But this party being too weak both in numbers and in success to carry their point openly and with a high hand, they were obliged to yield to another more moderate or more politic one, who undertook to manage the same thing for them by underhand means, that is, by professing a willingness and a desire to make peace, and throwing the blame of the renewal of hostilities on the enemy. This party was the *cat's-paw* of the first; and the true agents and promoters of the secret aims of power, consisting of such men as Pitt, Addington, &c., the more knowing diplomatists, the greater part of the public press, and the decent and less violent church-and-king men. The third were the dupes of the two

first, being composed of the great mass of the people, and the friends of peace and liberty, who believed that peace had been concluded in the spirit of peace, and that if his majesty's ministers were compelled to break it off, it was for the causes which they themselves chose to assign as just and lawful ones. The earliest of these which were brought forward to give the alarm, were stories of armaments in the ports of France; secondly, Sebastiani seen creeping like a rat along the coasts of the Adriatic, which portended the speedy loss of Egypt; thirdly, the stipulated retention of Malta in the hands of the Knights of St. John, which the French would convert into a stepping-stone to our possessions in India; and lastly, the meditated conquest of the world by the French Consul. All these pretexts are at present given up as vague and frivolous by the most stanch and able advocates of the late war, who lament that no mention was made by our statesmen of the day of the occupation of Switzerland and the confederation of Lombardy as the true grounds of the refusal to execute the treaty of Amiens. Neither was any mention made of another equally convincing and cogent argument against peace, that the throne of France was not as yet occupied by the Bourbons. But our ministers being determined, in pursuance of this last object, to risk the existence and welfare of the country on the issue of an unprincipled and hypocritical war, could bring forward no excuses for incurring this responsibility and balancing this evil, but such as implied (however absurdly and falsely), that the same risk was to be apprehended every moment from the insatiable and restless ambition of Buonaparte. In order to prepare the way for this desirable turn to the negotiations (for so it was considered by the furiously loyal and patriotic) no pains had been spared. During the short interval of peace, every mode of irritation, recrimination, and invective had been industriously resorted to and tacitly encouraged. When the most revolting charges were complained of, it was answered that they could not be

suppressed without tampering with the liberty of the press, though it was well known that the slightest breath from authority would have stifled them ; and a celebrated advocate on the trial of Peltier is supposed to have been sent over by government not long before (but on a sleeveless errand) to find new fuel for the flame and to extract new poison for the tooth of calumny to feed upon. Buonaparte in his public and private character was uniformly held up as a monster of ambition, cruelty, and lust. Everybody knows that it is only necessary to raise a bugbear before the English imagination in order to govern it at will. Whatever they hate or fear, they implicitly believe in, merely from the scope it gives to these passions ; and what they once believe in, they proceed to act upon, and rush blindly on their own destruction or that of others, without pausing to inquire into causes or consequences. Their own fury supplies them with resolution : the judgment of their betters directs the application to their cost. Gloomy, sullen, suspicious, brooding always on the worst side of things, indignant at every appearance of injustice, except when it is committed by themselves, and then scornfully resenting the imputation or turning round and boldly justifying it ; quarrelling with and maligning one another till their attention is roused by a common foe, their union being increased and cemented through the jarring elements of which it is composed ; never satisfied but when they have some object of jealousy or dislike to wreak their vengeance upon, they are but the dupes of whoever can take advantage of their ungovernable, headstrong humours ; mistake the strength of their passions and prejudices for the soundness of their reason and the goodness of their cause ; run from artificial terrors into real dangers ; have a sort of unconscious obtuseness and *bonhomme* even in their most flagrant acts of self-will, which they conceive all the world must admire ; show the same blindfold rage in the pursuit of right or wrong ; and to hate and be hated is the only thing in which they are sure to take

the lead. The English character is surcharged with spleen, distrust, and haughtiness; and the smallest pretext, the shadow of an excuse, a rumour, a nickname, is sufficient to make these qualities blaze out in all their wonted malignity. OCCASION, as one of our own poets has feigned, ever follows FURY hard at hand. We shall see that these remarks were verified at every step of the proceedings in the present instance. A writer of some note at the time boasted that he had done more than any one to bring about the war and foment a spirit of rancour by nicknaming Buonaparte *The Corsican*. This was not so much a piece of idle vanity in the individual as a just satire on the nation at large.

Buonaparte himself, despairing of establishing a cordial understanding with England, and probably piqued at the ill success his advances had met with, began to vent his chagrin in indirect sarcasms and national reflections. On one occasion he broke out in the following terms:—"They are always citing the example of England for her riches and good government. Well, then, I have got her budget: I will have it printed in the *Moniteur*. It will be seen that she has an actual deficit of between five and six hundred millions. She has, it is true, a considerable sinking fund, with which she may, as they pretend, pay off her debt in thirty-eight years: but in order to this, it would be necessary that she should stop short in her career at once, and raise no more loans. She does not call that a deficit; but she sets down among her receipts a loan which only serves to increase her debt, and it is impossible to foresee how she can ever wind up her accounts on such a system. England keeps up a land army of one hundred and ten thousand men, which costs her three hundred and thirty-three millions of livres annually. It is enormous, and the sign of a bad administration. It is the same with her marine, which costs four hundred and six millions: it is considerable, no doubt, but the expense is nevertheless out of proportion. People are enraptured with

England on hearsay: it is so in the *Belles Lettres*. Shakespear had been forgotten for two hundred years, even in his own country, when it pleased Voltaire, who was at Geneva and visited by a good many of the English, to cry up this author in order to pay his court to them;\* and every one repeated after him that Shakespear was the first writer in the world. I have read him; there is nothing in his works that approaches to Corneille or Racine. It is not even possible to read one of his pieces through, without feeling pity for them. As to Milton, there is only his Invocation to the Sun and one or two other passages; the rest is a mere rhapsody. I like Vely better than Hume. France has nothing to envy in England, a country that its inhabitants leave the instant they are able. There are at present more than forty thousand on the Continent." This passage may at least serve as a lesson against undervaluing an enemy. Buonaparte would have done right to have thought more highly of the capacity of the English in certain things, and to have trusted less to their generosity. He did not know the flint of which our character is ordinarily composed, nor the fire that sometimes lurks beneath it.

It is evident that Buonaparte had expected or wished for peace both from the low state of warlike preparation to which he suffered the army to be reduced, and from the disappointment and impatience he manifested as the hopes of it gradually vanished, and the designs of the English ministers were more clearly seen through. They showed no alacrity in executing the conditions of the treaty; for people are in no hurry to do that which they do not mean to do at all. Most of the French colonies were given back; but we retained possession of the Cape of Good Hope, of Alexandria and Malta. The two former were at length evacuated also; but Malta still remained a bone

\* Voltaire extolled the beauties of Shakespear long before this period, in his *Letters on England*.

of contention, and was just enough to answer the purpose, as while any part of the treaty was withheld, nothing was really granted. It was as easy to make peace split upon that rock as upon any other; and so far the prize was invaluable. It was at last agreed to give it up, if a sufficient guarantee for its neutrality could be found; but when this guarantee was pointed out by providing a garrison of Austrians and Russians, instead of Neapolitans, that also was refused of course. Any terms of peace were acceptable but what were practicable! As to the fears of Malta being hereafter seized upon by the French as the key to Egypt and our Eastern possessions, I do not believe that any such apprehensions were seriously entertained, or weighed so much as a feather in the balance; but even if they did, and there was a jealousy on the part of our merchants or statesmen that the French might possibly at some distant period wrest their acquisition to this purpose, yet no such plea is admissible in sound policy, on this plain and broad principle, that there is no providing by any artifice or precautions against all possible contingencies, and that if our selfish and grasping passions were as long-sighted and speculative as they are gross and narrow-minded, there could not be a moment's peace or security for the world, and we must be always at war, to prevent the possibility of any advantage being taken of us in time to come. We seize on and plunder distant continents, and then keep the world in amazement and dread with our disinterested denunciations against the ambitious and unprincipled projects of others, that may at some time or other rob us of our ill-gotten and uncertain booty. The First Consul, uneasy at the delays of the British ministry, and at the increasing tone of exasperation on both sides, so early as the 11th of February, 1803, had an interview with Lord Whitworth (our ambassador), in which for the space of nearly two hours he set forth the various causes of his dissatisfaction with the English govern-



ment in firm and animated language, rising in fervour as he proceeded, but without failing in the usual tone of courtesy due to an ambassador.

He first complained of the delay of the British in evacuating Alexandria and Malta ; cutting short all discussion on the latter subject by declaring he would as soon agree to Great Britain's possessing the suburb of St. Antoine as that island. He then referred to the abuse poured upon him by the English papers, but more especially by the French journals published in London. He affirmed that Georges and other Chouan chiefs, whom he accused of designs against his life, received relief and shelter in England ; and that two assassins had been apprehended in Normandy sent over by the French emigrants to murder him. This, he said, would be publicly proved in a court of justice, as was afterwards done at the trial of Pichegru and others. From this point he digressed to Egypt, of which he affirmed he could make himself master whenever he chose ; but that he considered it too paltry a stake to renew the war for. At the same time he contended that Egypt must sooner or later belong to France, either by the falling to pieces of the Turkish empire, or in consequence of some agreement with the Porte. In evidence of his peaceable intentions, he asked, what he should gain by going to war, since he had no means of acting offensively against England, except by a descent, of which he acknowledged the hazard in the strongest terms. The chances, he said, with his usual pointed frankness, were a hundred to one against him ; and yet he declared that the attempt should be made if he were now obliged to go to war. He extolled the power of both countries. The army of France, he said, could be soon recruited to four hundred and eighty thousand men ; but the fleets of England were such as he could not propose to match within the space of ten years at least. United, the two countries might govern the world, would they but understand each other. Had he found the least cordiality on the part

of England she should have had indemnities assigned her upon the Continent, treaties of commerce, all that she could ask or desire. But he confessed that his irritation increased daily, "since every gale that blew from England brought nothing but enmity and hatred against him." As the final result, he demanded the instant fulfilment of the treaty of Amiens, and the suppression of the abuse in the English newspapers. War was the alternative. To an allusion by Lord Whitworth to the changes in Piedmont and Switzerland as obstacles to peace, Buonaparte replied that those were trifles which must have been foreseen while the treaty was pending, and it was a mere pretext to recur to them now. Besides, the delivering up of Malta to the English would not remedy them. They parted with mutual civility; and Lord Whitworth expressed himself perfectly satisfied with his audience, but soon after sent over a long account of it to the ministers, tending to inflame the quarrel and remove the hope of an adjustment of differences to a greater distance.\*

\* "I send you an account of the very memorable scene which occurred at Madame Buonaparte's drawing-room on the 13th of March, 1803. I believe I am the only living witness, as those who were near the person of Lord Whitworth were members of the corps diplomatique, Cobenzel, Marcoff, Lucchesini, all dead. Many years after I became intimately acquainted with the Marchese Lucchesini at Florence, when I had an opportunity of referring to that remarkable conversation. It was announced that Madame Buonaparte was to receive on the following Sunday, and it was reported that she was to have maids of honour for the first time: a little curiosity was excited on this score. The apartment of Madame Buonaparte was on the opposite side of the Tuileries, in which Buonaparte held his levees. I was acquainted with Lord Whitworth, who told me to place myself near to him, in order to afford facility for presentation, as Madame Buonaparte would occupy an arm-chair to which he pointed, and on each side of which were two tabourets. As all foreigners had been presented to General Buonaparte at his levee, his presence was not expected. The rooms, two in number, were not very large; the ladies were seated round the rooms in arm-chairs: a passage was left, I suppose for Madame Buonaparte to pass without obstacle. When the door of the adjoining room was opened, instead of Madame Buonaparte the First Consul entered; and, as Lord Whitworth was the first ambassador he encountered, he addressed him by inquiring about the Duchess of Dorset's health, she being absent from a cold. He then observed, that we had had fifteen years war; Lord Whitworth smiled very courteously, and said it was fifteen years too

In a word, it was obvious that the First Consul was bent upon peace; and the more anxious he was for it the more the English cabinet grew alarmed and determined to break it off. They hated the man; and it was only in a war that they could hope to destroy him and the Republic. The duplicity and misrepresentation of which Buonaparte was the object on this occasion, made him determine in future to recur to the common forms of diplomacy and communicate his sentiments through his ministers, to whom he could in that case appeal as evidence in his justification. The former method was, however, more suited to the genius of the man and to his situation as the head of a free state, who having no sentiments or interests but those of the community to express, expressed them openly, manfully, and with the degree of energy and warmth they infused into his breast; and that by a republican boldness and simplicity presented a marked contrast to those state-puppets, who being actuated only by their pride and passions while they profess to aim at the public good, should always explain them-

much. 'We shall, probably,' replied General Buonaparte, 'have fifteen years more; and, if so, England will have to answer for it to all Europe, and to God and man.' He then inquired where the armaments in Holland were going on, for he knew of none. Then for a moment he quitted Lord Whitworth, and passed all the ladies, addressing Mrs. Greathead only, though the Duchess of Gordon and her daughter, Lady Georgina, were present. After speaking to several officers in the centre of the room, which was crowded, he returned to Lord Whitworth, and asked why Malta was not given up. Lord Whitworth then looked more serious, and said he had no doubt that Malta would be given up when the other articles of the treaty were complied with. General Buonaparte then left the room, and Madame Buonaparte immediately entered. As soon as the drawing-room was over, I observed to Lord Whitworth that it was the first cabinet council I had ever witnessed. He laughingly answered, 'by far the most numerously attended.' Lord Whitworth then addressed the American Minister, who was very deaf, and repeated what had passed, and I perceived that he was very much offended at what had occurred. In justice to the First Consul, I must say that the impropriety consisted in the unfitness of the place for such a subject; the tone of his voice was not raised, as was said at the time. He spoke in the same tone as when he inquired for the Duchess of Dorset."—*From Notes and Queries*, vol. v., communicated by the Rev. S. Sandford.

selves by proxy, that there may be no clue to their real feelings and intentions, and as little connexion between their lips and the sentiments of their hearts, as there is between their interests and those of the people.

On the 8th of March, a speech from the throne recommended to the British parliament the seconding the government in completing all the measures of defence which circumstances might appear to render necessary for the honour of the crown and the essential interests of the people. These precautions were to be grounded on considerable preparations said to be making in the ports of France and Holland, and on differences of a high importance which existed between his Majesty and the French government. Buonaparte had been just reading this notable message in a despatch which he had received from London, when he had to enter the drawing-room of the Tuileries where the Foreign ambassadors were collected, and stopping short before the English ambassador, he put the following hurried questions to him in a tone of surprise and impatience :—"What does your cabinet mean? What is the motive for raising these rumours of armaments in our harbours? How is it possible to impose in this manner on the credulity of the nation, or to be so ignorant of our real intentions? If the actual state of things be known, it must be evident to all that there are only two armaments fitting out for St. Domingo; that this island engrosses all our disposable means. Why then these complaints? Can peace be already considered as a burden to be shaken off? Is Europe to be again deluged with blood?" He then addressed Count Marcaff and the Chevalier Azara—"The English wish for war; but if they draw the sword first, I will be the last to return it to the scabbard. They do not respect treaties, which henceforth we must cover with black crape." He then again turned to Lord Whitworth: "To what purpose is this pretended alarm? Against whom do you take these measures of precaution? I have not a single ship of

the line in any port in France. But if you arm, I will arm too ; if you fight, I will fight. You may destroy France, but you cannot intimidate her." Lord Whitworth bowed, and made no reply. The First Consul left that part of the saloon, and, without going the usual round, retired soon after. The rest of the company followed, except the English and Russian ambassadors, who withdrew to the recess of a window, and were seen conversing together long after. Such is the account of a scene in which Buonaparte's temper and language were represented to have risen to such a height, that Lord Whitworth every moment expected he would strike him, and was prepared to have run his sword through his body if he had ! And the English nation gloried for many a year in the notion of the rage into which Buonaparte was thrown by our not making peace with him, and of the signal revenge which our ambassador would have taken on the spot, had he not contained himself within certain limits ! To fables and caricatures of this kind did the Tory party think it necessary to resort to rouse the passions and prejudices of the multitude to a pitch of madness. The principles of the Revolution in themselves wearing a seductive and popular aspect, the only chance its opponents had was to divert attention from them, by vilifying the persons of those who defended them, and holding them up alternately as objects of terror and ridicule. They did everything to provoke Buonaparte beyond the bounds of patience, and then made a merit of having succeeded, representing it as a new ground of war ; as if he who had received, not those who had offered the insults and provocations, was the aggressor, and he was a man of that violence and irritability of temper that no peace could be kept with him. Everything being thus referred to personal prejudice and rancour, the fairest offers were treated as insidious, the plainest proofs were answered by a volley of abuse, or by a sneer of contempt. Buonaparte, by his flaws and starts of temper, showed that he was still one of the people,

and responsible to them for the issue of affairs. He was naturally mortified at the vain professions of peace by which he had been amused, and disgusted at the barefaced imposture by which they were broken off. He was not one of that favoured race of mortals who can do no wrong; who are invulnerable to opinion, accountable to none but themselves, and who preserve the same equanimity because they receive the same obedience and outward homage whether they ruin or save—alike indifferent to the execration or the gratitude of their country. Persecution drives men beside themselves; the withholding of the best-founded claims makes them set up unreasonable ones. We cannot be surprised if Buonaparte, to shield himself in some degree from the annoyance of vulgar ribaldry and the supercilious airs of power, seriously bethought himself of borrowing an armour of proof, which the Pope helped to buckle on for him, and of binding the laurel-wreath of victory (as it was not to be that of peace also) with the golden circlet of an imperial crown.

The First Consul did not, however, all at once throw away the hope of an accommodation, as the following speech in the council of state just after will testify:—"It is asked, if the present political juncture will not be unfavourable to the establishment of a national bank. The Romans, when besieged, sent an army into Africa. If we should have war, which is not to be presumed, it would diminish the imposts by thirty millions. We should live in Europe, in Hanover. Italy would furnish us with forty millions, instead of twenty; Holland with thirty millions, instead of nothing, which it actually contributes. I told the English ambassador, 'You may indeed kill Frenchmen, but not intimidate them.' I am unable to conceive the motives of the king's message. There are two points; first, the armaments; this reduces itself to the expedition to Louisiana, two thousand men detained by the frost, and three *avisos* at Dunkirk, which set sail for St. Domingo the very day of the

message. The English ministers cannot pretend ignorance of that; it is sufficiently public. Otherwise, if they had demanded explanations, they might have been made easy on that head. Secondly, there are the discussions on the treaty. But I am not aware of any such; there are none. Do they mean to allude to Malta, or to keep it? But treaties must be executed, and France cannot recede on that point without receding on all the rest. It would be contrary to honour. A nation ought never to do anything contrary to its honour; for in this case it would be the lowest of all; it were better to perish. If we gave up this point, they would next demand to have a commissary at Dunkirk. These times are past; we are no longer what we were. We will not become the vassals of England. They well-nigh threatened me with war eight or nine months ago, if I did not conclude a treaty of commerce. I replied: 'All in good time; I will not have a treaty of commerce; I wish to establish a *tariff*, which will suit us best.' Nevertheless, it was in this manner that they forced a treaty upon M. de Vergennes; though he knew well enough that it was injurious. If they mean to speak of Malta and intend to keep it, war is inevitable, though Malta belongs to the sea, and it was to receive a garrison of Neapolitans, who are well known not to be very favourable to us: but then our honour! The English are in the habit of disturbing the Continent, and from the little resistance they in general meet with, are exceedingly sensible to it; so much the worse for them! Would it not seem that we have it in view to invade England? We ask nothing from her; all that we require is the execution of treaties. If the message has a reference to the exterior, it can only be to Malta. If it has to do with domestic affairs, its object may be to put on board their vessels five or six thousand individuals, who give them cause of uneasiness, in consequence of what has taken place at the funeral of Colonel Despard, or for some other end of which I am ignorant, and am at a loss to

divine. For in general, when the English are resolved on war, they begin by issuing secret orders five or six months beforehand, to capture all merchant vessels ; and they give notice to the Exchange. On the contrary, this message has fallen as if from the clouds ; they knew nothing of it the evening before. The King was following the chase ; the Exchange was not apprised of it. So that it has had an effect which was never before known in England ; the funds have fallen from 72 to 62. It is then an inexplicable caprice, and all for nothing. For what says the message ? It calls for neither men nor money ; it only says that it hopes the Commons will show themselves *if we invade England*, and the Commons reply, that they will. Behold a mighty discovery ! Besides, all this does more harm to England than to us, for she exists only by her credit. All her merchantmen have orders not to stir. War would oblige her to incur expenses, and make her sustain losses forty times greater than those which we should have to suffer. It would be without object."

The whole proceeding, of which Buonaparte makes a political mystery, is an obvious moral truism. The English cabinet had determined all along never to conclude peace, and it could no longer put it off without an abrupt declaration of war. The excesses of the French Revolution had shocked and terrified the upper classes ; the glory and the growing prosperity of the Republic under its new leader, galled their pride still more. No sacrifices, no risks, no breach of faith were too great to avoid setting the seal to a system which affronted and gave the lie to all their boasted pretensions and maxims. But in order to prevent the scandal of a sudden rupture (the true reasons of which would not bear disclosure), it was brought forward as if quite unawares, and from a momentary panic at imaginary armaments in the ports of France. The fears and anger of the country being thus excited by an object which had no existence, might then be easily directed to any object the government



pleased. It would be a pity that such a stock of patriotism and loyalty should be collected by the most approved conduit (the king's speech), and in the grand reservoir of public opinion (the breast of the Commons of Great Britain) in vain. Our passions would not be the less inflamed by finding that we had been duped into them. The blow once struck, we should not stop to inquire into the grounds of the quarrel, but be ready to commit ourselves to destruction in order to avoid it. Such is the web of which loyalty and patriotism are vulgarly composed; and in this manner was the war of 1803 got up by a paltry stratagem, and by disseminating a false alarm of an invasion which only war could bring about.

The reports of war soon gained ground, and the First Consul spoke out more plainly on the subject. Of the tone and spirit in which he met these first hostile demonstrations on the part of Great Britain, the following observations delivered at an audience (the 11th Floreal), convey a remarkable specimen:—"Since the English (he said, after the Foreign ambassadors were gone) wish to force us to leap the ditch, we will leap it. They may take some of our frigates or our colonies; but I will carry terror into the streets of London, and I give them warning, that they will bewail the end of this war with tears of blood. The ministers have made the King of England tell a lie in the face of Europe. There were no armaments going on in France; there has been no negotiation. They have not transmitted to me a single note: Lord Whitworth could not help acknowledging it. And yet it is by the aid of such vile insinuations, that a government seeks to excite the passions. For the last two months I have endured all sorts of insults from the English government. I have let them fill up the measure of their offences; they have construed that into feebleness, and have redoubled their presumption to the point of making their ambassador say: *Do so and so, or I shall depart in seven days.* Is it thus that they address a great nation? He was told to

write, and that his notes would be laid before the eyes of government. *No*, was the reply, *I have orders to communicate only verbally*. Is not this an unheard-of form of negotiating? Does it not show a marked determination to shuffle, equivocate, play at fast and loose as they please, and leave no proof against themselves? But if they falsify facts, what faith can be placed in their sincerity in other respects? They are deceived if they think to dictate laws to forty millions of people. They have been led to believe that I dreaded war, lest it should shake my authority. I will raise two millions of men, if it be necessary. The result of the first war has been to aggrandise France by the addition of Belgium and Piedmont. The result of this will be to consolidate our federative system still more firmly. The bond of union between two great nations can be no other than justice and the observation of treaties. The one towards which they are violated, cannot, ought not to suffer it under pain of degradation. Let her but once give way, and she is lost. It would be better for the French people to bend to the yoke, and erect the throne of the King of England in Paris, than to submit to the caprices and arbitrary pretensions of her government. One day they will demand the salute from our vessels; another they will forbid our navigators to pass beyond such a latitude. Already even they observe with jealousy that we were clearing out our harbours, and re-establishing our marine. They complain of it; they demand guarantees. A short while ago the Vice-Admiral Lesseigues touched at Malta; he had two ships with him; he found fifteen English ones there. They wanted him to fire a salute; Lesseigues refused: some words passed. If he had yielded, I would have had him carried in procession on an ass; which is a mode of punishment more ignominious than the guillotine. I flatter myself that when our conduct shall be made known, there is not a corner of Europe in which it will not meet with approbation. When England consented to a peace, she thought that we

should tear one another to pieces in the interior, that the generals would give France trouble. The English have done all they could ; but their intrigues of every kind have been in vain. Every one has occupied himself only in repairing his losses. A little sooner, a little later, we must have had war. It is best to have it at once, before our maritime commerce is restored."

There were some members of the senate present on this occasion ; amongst others, Laplace and Bougainville, who talked of the facility of a descent upon England. All is easy to French imagination : it costs only words. After some vain altercations and affected concessions, which came to nothing, and were meant to come to nothing, Lord Whitworth took his departure. On occasion of this circumstance being communicated to the legislative body, the orator Fontanes made a speech, not like Buonaparte, laying down facts one by one, like the pieces of a mosaic-pavement, clear at once and solid, but running into extravagant assumptions and false sentiment. "If the English," he said, "should dare to combat us, be it so ! France is ready to cover herself once more with those arms which have conquered Europe. It is not France who will declare war ; but she will accept the challenge without fear, and will know how to maintain it with energy. Our country is become anew the centre of civilized Europe. England can no longer say that she is defending the indispensable principles of society, menaced to its foundations : it is we who may hold this language, if war is rekindled : it is we who shall then have to avenge the rights of nations and the cause of humanity, in repelling the unjust attack of a government that negotiates to deceive, that asks for peace to prepare for war, and that signs treaties only to break them. If the signal is once given, France will rally by an unanimous movement round the hero she admires. All the parties whom he keeps in order near him will only dispute who shall manifest most zeal and courage. All feel the want of his genius,

and acknowledge that he alone can sustain the weight and grandeur of our new destinies. The exiles newly recalled to their country will be foremost to defend it," &c. We have here some of the first flashy indications of that vain-glorious and overweening spirit, which, turning the grand question into a national quarrel, and affecting obliquely to disclaim the principles of freedom out of which it arose and which sanctified it, substituted the effervescence of French conceit for the old leaven of Jacobinism, looked round with gaping credulity for universal admiration, when it could only take a stern defensive attitude and submit with firm resignation to an honourable stigma; made so many enemies, lost so many friends, and while it set no bounds to the arrogance of its pretensions, struck at the principle which had hitherto supported them, and to which they must return to make a final stand.

Great Britain declared war against France the 18th of May, 1803. Period ever fatal and memorable—the commencement of another Iliad of woes not to be forgotten while the world shall last! The former war had failed, and the object of this was to make another desperate effort to put down, by force of arms and at every risk, the example of a revolution which had overturned a hateful but long-established tyranny, and had hitherto been successful over every attempt to crush it by external or internal means. The other causes assigned at different periods and according to the emergency were mere masks to cover this, which was the true, the constant, and sole-moving one in all circumstances and in all fortunes; through good report and evil report, in victory or defeat, in the abyss of despair or the plenitude of success, in every stage and phasis of its commencement, progress, or double termination. There might have been a doubt on this subject at one period (though none to a sober and dispassionate judgment); but those who say otherwise at this time of day, and after the catastrophe, are not to be believed. Whether that object was just or not is a

different question ; and there may be two opinions upon the subject, that of the free or of the slave. Of all the fictions that were made use of to cloak this crying iniquity, the pleas of justice and humanity were the most fallacious. No very great ceremony was employed on the present occasion, but rather a cavalier and peremptory tone was encouraged. Malta was a merely nominal pretext. The encroachments of France, and the extension of her influence since the conclusion of the treaty, were said to endanger our possessions in India, and to require Malta as an additional security. But had not we extended our conquests in India in the mean time ? Or would this have been held a valid plea if the French had broken off the treaty on that ground ? But we ourselves are always exceptions to the rules we impose so magisterially on others. Justice is not an attribute of the sea ; conquests on the continent of Asia are very different things from conquests on the continent of Europe. Morality is one thing between the tropics, and another nearer to the pole, and so on. As to the domineering spirit and ambitious projects ascribed to France, it is true she had come off victor in the late contest, which was a great crime, no doubt, and an outrage on all proper decorum. In war, however, one of the two parties must have the best of it ; and it is not usual for the conquering party to give up its advantages. If you attack an adversary and he strikes you down, your returning to the charge in despair or revenge does not prove that you are in the right. Baffled malice is not justice ; nor does it become so by a repetition of the offence, nor by any quantity of mischief it inflicts on itself or others. The federative system which Buonaparte talked of strengthening was calculated to barricade France against the successive coalitions and the formidable lines of circumvallation which both now and afterwards the allied sovereigns drew round it. Lombardy was not independent, but had been wrested by France from its unwilling subjection to Austria. Let the facts speak whose sway

was mildest or best. If legitimate princes expect, after losing the game of war, to receive back the stakes, they do not practise the precepts which they preach. They would play long enough at the game on these terms. As to Buonaparte's making himself master of Switzerland, it was not defacing the shrine of liberty, but stopping up a door in a wall, through which a hireling assassin stole to destroy it. Buonaparte did not shed the blood of the Swiss, but prevented them from shedding it themselves in a useless quarrel. William Tell could not come to life again to defend the neutrality of his country; or if he had, would hardly have sided with its old oppressors (though there is no saying). Buonaparte left the Swiss in possession of their ancient laws and franchises; and only claimed so much influence over them or management in their concerns, as to prevent their territory from becoming the rendezvous of foreign cabals and conspiracies against the French Republic, or a thoroughfare for the hordes of slaves and barbarians to march to their long-promised prey. The old Republic was jealous of the new one; and the country places from simplicity and custom, the towns from a mixture of aristocratic pride, were averse to change. The plan which Buonaparte chalked out for them was, for the most part, a model of moderation and good sense. He wished to preserve the right of voting for their representatives in the democratic cantons and pastoral districts; continued the *graveau* or right of calling their magistrates to account every two years; extended the privilege of exercising the functions of government to a greater number of families in the aristocratic cantons; kept the independence of the cantons distinct; told the patriot Reding that the sun would return from the west to the east before the Valais would return under the yoke of the oligarchy of Berne, and kept the Valteline out of the clutches of the Grisons. Still it was treading on ticklish and forbidden ground. It gave a handle to the poets and jurists against him, extremes

of the human understanding, the conjunction of which is ominous. He did not enough regard the real strength and the mock morality of England. He said if the English cabinet had shown the least disposition to interfere, he would have made himself *Landamman*. In the same spirit he declared that "England could not contend single-handed against France." Perhaps not, if England could have been lashed to the Continent ; but as this was not likely to happen, I do not see that we were to go to war for an idle national vaunt.

In order to put ourselves into a situation to judge impartially in this case, and to see on which side the impediments to maintaining the relations of peace and amity lay, let us for a moment reverse the picture, and turn the tables the other way. Let us suppose that from the first cessation of hostilities a system of unqualified abuse and unsparing ribaldry had commenced on the other side of the water against the English nation and government ; that his Majesty King George III. had been daily accused of the most shocking public and private vices, and his name unblushingly coupled with epithets that cannot be repeated ; that the females of the royal family had been held up to opprobrium and contempt, as engaged in the grossest and most scandalous intrigues ; that on application being made to put a stop to the evil, the only redress that could be obtained was an appeal to a court of justice, where all the charges were insisted on with double relish and acrimony, amidst a shout of exultation and jubilee from the whole venal press ; let us suppose that the ruling monarch of this country had been, without the intermission of a day, taunted with the mention of his constitutional malady, and with his being the descendant of a petty German Elector ; let us suppose the surviving branches of the Stuart family to be maintained in France at the public expense, and their pretensions to the throne of England sometimes broadly insinuated, never clearly disavowed, but kept in a doubtful state, to

be brought forward at a moment's warning; that bands of organised rebels and assassins, in the pay of these princes, hovered constantly on the English coast to excite insurrection, and glided even into the royal palaces; that they had several times attempted the life of the king, but that they were still in the same favour, and kept up a clandestine intercourse with the Republican government; let us suppose that remonstrances were made against these proceedings, which were received with official coldness and contempt; let us suppose it to have been considered as a mark of want of zeal and devotion to the person and government of the First Consul for any Frenchman to visit England, or to be introduced at the English court; let us suppose every advance towards confidence or cordiality to be carefully shunned, every handle for recrimination or distrust to be eagerly seized on; that the articles of the pretended treaty of peace were executed slowly, one by one; that the reluctance to conclude it evidently increased in proportion to the delays that had taken place; that at last, when the farce could be kept up no longer, it was suddenly put an end to by a flat refusal to execute one of the stipulations, and by forged rumours of preparations in the ports of England to invade France—who would have asked in that case on which side the bar to peace lay, or which government harboured a rooted and rancorous desire for the renewal of the war? But it may be said that there was a difference between Napoleon Buonaparte and George III. Yes, it was on that difference that the whole question turned. It was the sense of degradation, and of the compromise of the kingly dignity in condescending to make peace on a friendly and equal footing with an individual who had risen from the people, and who had no power over them but from the services he had rendered them, that produced a repugnance, amounting to loathing, to a peace with the Republic (like the touch of the leprosy, like embracing an infectious body), that plunged us into all the



horrors and calamities of war, and brought us back in the end to the arms and to the blessings of legitimate government! Persons who are fond of dwelling on the work of retribution, might perhaps trace its finger here. The monarch survived the accomplishment of all his wishes, but without knowing that they had been accomplished. To those who long after passed that way, at whatever hour of the night, a light shone from one of the watch-towers of Windsor Castle—it was from the chamber of a king, old, blind, bereft of reason, “with double darkness bound” of body and mind; nor was that film ever removed, nor those eyes or that understanding restored, to hail the sacred triumph of kings over mankind; but the light streamed and streamed (indicating no dawn within) for long years after the celebration of that day which gladdened the hearts of monarchs and of menial nations, and through that second night of slavery which succeeded—the work of a single breast, which it had dearly accomplished in darkness, in self-oblivion, and in more than kingly solitude!

## CHAPTER XXXII.

## PREPARATIONS TO INVADE ENGLAND.

Preparations to invade England; France unprepared for war; energetic measures of the First Consul and his government; the first conscription levied; Napoleon visits the fortresses in the Netherlands and on the coast; returns to Paris, and orders a flotilla; stupendous preparations at Boulogne for the expedition; enthusiasm of the English people; Buonaparte's plans for invasion.

THE English, previously to any formal declaration of war, had seized on all the French shipping in their ports; and Buonaparte, provoked beyond measure by the infraction of the treaty, and by this new outrage, made severe and perhaps unwarrantable reprisals, by detaining all the English residing in France as prisoners of war. Nothing could certainly excuse the extremity of this mode of retaliation, both on account of the extent of the injury and the description of persons on whom it chiefly fell, but that it might serve as a lesson to a people who preached lofty maxims of morality to others and thought their own will a sufficient law to themselves, that justice and courtesy are reciprocal among nations, and that if one of them chooses to indulge its enmity without cause and without bounds, it at least cannot do so with impunity. He never expressed any regret on this subject, but rather his concern that he had not made the regulations more rigorous, in revenge for our having degraded the French prisoners of war by sending them on board the hulks. We had met with our match for once, and were like spoiled children, who had cut their fingers in playing with edged tools. Buonaparte's spirit and firmness were often carried into

obstinacy; or it would have been more to his credit if he had relaxed from this arbitrary determination after the first ebullition of impatience and resentment was over; and probably he would have done so, but for fresh and aggravated provocations. Repeated landings of Chouans and brigands on the French coast might not tend to improve his temper, or to make him sensible of what was due to the generosity and magnanimity of the English character. He indeed afterwards offered to compromise the matter, by including the *detenus* in an exchange of prisoners, but the English government stood out upon a political punctilio, disregarding the prolonged distresses of their countrymen over which they affected to make such pathetic lamentations, but which they would not go an inch out of their way, or abate a jot of their sullen scorn and defiance to alleviate. Why then should Buonaparte? A few exceptions were occasionally made in favour of literary and scientific men, or those who were considered as something more than mere Englishmen. The rest were condemned to linger out a long and painful captivity, which was equally without dignity or even the sting of disgrace, and as hopeless in the prospect of its termination as it was unaccountable in its commencement. It is not too much to conjecture that the Tory ministry felt no very acute sympathy, nor took a very active interest in their sufferings. They had been rightly served, and had been caught in the trap that had been prepared for them by their idle curiosity and ridiculous *Gallomania*!\* Their harsh treatment affixed an odium on the French government and nation; and it was of little consequence by what means the popular mind on this side of the channel was gangrened and inflamed. It was immaterial what ingredients were

\* When a young artist at this period was questioned whether he had been over to France, and he answered that he had not, nor had he any wish to go, he received a smiling reply from the most flattering quarter, "You are very right, you are very right, Mr. —."

thrown into the boiling cauldron of national hate, or employed to make the charm of loyalty "thick and slab." Whatever swelled the war-whoop or cut off the chance of reconciliation, pleased. The seizure of Hanover (as belonging to the King of England, though at peace with France) was in the same point of view regarded as no unpropitious omen; and the occupation of Tarento and other seaports of the kingdom of Naples by the French, soon after the breaking out of hostilities, was cited as a proof of the justice and expediency of the war, and as disclosing in the clearest light their real character and previous intentions, together with the unprincipled and perfidious policy of their leader. The latter seems at least to have been determined that if he could not have peace, he would make other countries support the expenses of war. Buonaparte was all along treated like an outlaw, which he could not help: if he had behaved like a driveller or poltroon, this would have been his own fault.

The First Consul had hoped for the duration of peace. He had indeed been so little apprehensive of an immediate recurrence to a state of hostility, that he had granted an unlimited leave of absence to every French soldier who had applied for it; and this permission had been taken advantage of to such an extent that the greater part of the infantry regiments were nearly reduced to skeletons. They would even have been wholly disbanded had it not been from regard to the officers, who had no means of subsistence but their pay. The cavalry in like manner had been suffered to dwindle away almost to nothing. The parks of artillery and field-equipages were broken up. Every other consideration had given way to economy. New plans were adopted for re-casting the artillery, and everything had been taken to the large foundries, where they had already begun to break up the cannon for the purpose of throwing them into the furnaces. None of the materials of war were

at hand, or in a state of forwardness. Such a condition was not calculated to excite the alarm of the neighbouring states; but might have its share in reviving their hopes, and hastening the moment of an attack. As the First Consul had reckoned on the approaching conclusion of peace, and was chiefly occupied in promoting internal improvements, he had not paid much attention to the plans presented to him by the war-minister, Berthier, and by General Marmont; so that the breaking up of the whole field of artillery was going on rapidly, when the cry of war suddenly reached his ears.

He was greatly vexed at so unpleasant a circumstance. He sent in haste for the war-minister and for Marmont. "Really," said he, "if you were not my friends, I should suspect that you were betraying me. Send instantly to the arsenals and foundries to suspend your fatal projects, and get as much artillery in readiness as you can possibly collect." The navy was in a still less promising condition. Most of the sailors had been sent to take possession of the colonies restored to the French, and the marine department had just dispatched a flotilla to occupy a small factory in the East Indies, in which they had been reinstated. Such was the security and neglect of ordinary precautions against the possible renewal of war that prevailed on all sides. The difficulties the First Consul had to contend with in meeting the emergency were immense; but his activity and the resources he called into play were in proportion. He never relaxed in his efforts, nor showed any signs of embarrassment. With that soldier-like frankness which is the mixed result of courage and of pride, and which was a part of his character, he lost no time in making France acquainted with her real situation. He laid before the legislative body the several communications which had taken place previously to the rupture; and as they proved that he had done everything on his part to make good the treaty which had been wantonly

set aside, the nation warmly took up his cause, pressed round its chief, and cheerfully came forward with the means required for issuing victorious out of a struggle in which his enemies could hardly pretend that he was the aggressor, but which was aimed at the existence and independence of the state he governed.

The larger towns voted the sums necessary for building ships of war, which were named after the places which had contributed the means to equip them. The first conscription, the plan of which had already been discussed in the council of state, was drawn out, numbering in its ranks a multitude of hardy young men, accustomed to the labours of the field, and capable of facing the hardships of a soldier's life; while the decorations of the Legion of Honour and the rewards and promotions distributed among the common soldiery tended to give a new character to the army. The cavalry and artillery were remounted: everything was soon put upon a war footing. The First Consul was constantly receiving projects for an attack upon England. His first step was to put in motion a part of the troops that were stationed on the Lower Rhine, and order them to advance into Hanover. The management of this expedition was entrusted to General Mortier, who commanded the first military division. The Hanoverian army, under the Duke of Cambridge and General Walmoden, withdrew at the approach of the French, and successively occupied different positions; but were at length compelled to disband, after giving up their arms, horses, and ammunition. The regiments of French cavalry were now sent to Hanover to be remounted, as they had formerly been sent into Normandy; and the Electorate furnished considerable military stores of all kinds. If the English were justified in keeping possession of Malta (in the teeth of treaties) lest it should at some future time be made a means of annoying us in India, were not the French at least equally justified in taking possession of a coun-

try whose sovereign was at war with them, and whose resources would be instantly turned against them with the first occasion, in spite of the provisions of the Germanic constitution? This was the answer given to Prussia and Austria, who, being in the true secret of the war, gave themselves little trouble about the diplomatic glosses on either sides. The Prince Royal of Denmark was the only sovereign who protested against the informality of the measure, and raised an army of thirty thousand men in Holstein, but being unsupported by any other power, he soon laid aside the offensive attitude which he had assumed.

The First Consul had long intended to visit the Netherlands; he took the occasion of the rupture with England to fulfil this intention, and at the same time to inspect the coasts and harbours of the Channel. He set out from St. Cloud with Madame Buonaparte (who accompanied him in almost all his journeys) and dined at Compiègne. He went to visit the palace, which had been turned into a school of arts and manufactures, and where no fitter spot could be found for serving the dinner than the landing-place of the great staircase. Buonaparte expressed a feeling of regret at beholding the dilapidated condition of so noble a building, and that same evening wrote to the minister of the interior to give orders for the repair of this majestic pile. The school of arts was removed to Chalons. It was right not to have the school and workshops there; but perhaps it would have been better to have left the ruin standing as a memento of the past, a warning for the future: he might in that case have been himself still standing, but for the affectation of restoring decayed palaces and obsolete institutions! He was received at Amiens with an enthusiastic welcome: he stayed some days here, visiting the several establishments and manufactories, in the company of citizens Monge, Chaptal, and Berthollet: he next passed through Montreuil, Etaples, Boulogne, Ambleteuse, Vimereux, Calais, and Dunkirk, ordering the most skilful engineers at

those several places to fall in with his suite, and asking questions of every person he met. From Dunkirk he proceeded through the principal fortified towns and seaports to Antwerp, which remained in the condition in which he had received it back ; but where, after its condition had been thoroughly examined, those important works were undertaken which were in the sequel carried into effect.

A naval council was assembled for the purpose of deliberating on the means the Chief Consul possessed of grappling with the power of England at sea ; and he became soon convinced that the resources at his actual disposal were wholly inadequate to the object which he had in contemplation. The council was unanimously of opinion that the fleet of men-of-war afforded no chance of success. The only chance that remained of contending with England on an equal footing was to attempt a descent, which could not be effected without the aid of a flotilla. Decrès, the minister of marine, was against the plan, saying that if the French constructed a flotilla the English would raise one also, and come out to meet them. Admiral Bruix was for it, and his opinion prevailed. The First Consul immediately gave orders to the civil and naval engineers to draw up plans and estimates of the expenses of the works in each department of the service, and to present models of the vessels which they deemed best calculated for the undertaking. He then proceeded to Brussels, where he was received with the most lively acclamations, and returned to Paris by way of Liege, Givet, Sedan, Reims, and Soissons. He did not pass through a single town that was famed for any particular branch of industry without visiting its workshops and manufactories, and without constantly manifesting his regret at being obliged so soon to withdraw his attention from the sources of national prosperity to objects of a very different nature. Immediately after his return to Paris, on comparing the various reports that had been sent in, he issued directions for constructing a



vast number of gun-boats, flat-bottomed boats, and other craft, to the amount of some thousands. Each considerable city had voted money for the building of a man-of-war; the less wealthy and populous made the same offer of gun-boats or flat-bottomed boats. These offers were accepted; and in order to lose no time, and not to interfere with the ships of war which were on the stocks, the keels were laid along the banks of navigable rivers, where the carpenters and other workmen were assembled from the adjacent districts; and when finished they were floated down to the mouths of the rivers running into the sea between Harfleur and Flushing, and being collected into little squadrons and sent forth from their retreats, crept close along the shore, favoured by the breezes or protected by the batteries erected on the capes and promontories to their place of rendezvous. Holland likewise furnished her own flotilla on the same plan.

While the French navy (if this Lilliputian armament can be called so) was displaying such unwonted activity, the army was not idle. The regiments, the greater part of which were composed of conscripts, quitted their garrisons, and proceeded to form camps, which extended from Utrecht to the mouth of the Somme. The camp of Utrecht was commanded by General Marmont, who had been succeeded as inspector of artillery by General Songis. This and Mortier's formed the first and second corps. The others, under the orders of Davoust, Soult, Ney, Lannes, and Junot, with the regiments of dragoons and chasseurs, lined the coast from the Scheldt to the mouths of the Oise and of the Aisne. The troops thus distributed were employed and exercised in the manner of the Romans; they laid down the musket to take up the mattock, and the mattock to resume the musket; and, to complete the omen derived from this similarity, a Roman battleaxe was reported to have been dug up near Boulogne, at the same time that medals of William the Conqueror were also said to be found under the spot where Buonaparte's tent had been fixed.

The engineers projected immense works, which were all executed in this manner by the troops. They scooped out the harbour of Boulogne, which had been selected as the centre of the intended operations; they constructed a pier, built a bridge, opened a sluice, and dug a basin capable of holding two thousand of the vessels of the flotilla. It was resolved to form a port at Vimereux, which was to be raised fifteen feet above the surface of the sea in the highest tides. The troops accordingly fell to work, and in less than a year they had excavated and lined with masonry a basin fit to receive two hundred gun-boats.

At Ambleteuse the works which had been left unfinished in the time of Louis XVI. were recommenced. The bed of the river was so obstructed that the water would not run off, but covered several thousand acres of land in high cultivation, thereby reducing numbers of families to poverty, and generating unwholesome effluvia and noxious distempers in the neighbourhood. All this was in a short time remedied. A sluice was formed, and the river returning within its channel, gave back to agriculture the land which it had overflowed, and to the adjacent country the salubrity which it had lost. Thus in time of war did Buonaparte contrive and execute the works of peace! The troops who were employed in these various and arduous labours were paid: they proceeded in them with alacrity, and only left off when they were compelled by the tide, and then they resumed their firelocks and went to exercise. It was the same at Boulogne, where all the works and establishments of a great naval arsenal sprung up as if by magic. Magazines were formed, ships built, cannon founded, sails and cordage made, biscuits baked, and the army, which was busy in all these tasks, trained at the same time. Various manœuvres were performed by night, and the soldiers were practised in embarking and disembarking with celerity. The superintendence of so many undertakings might be said to surpass human powers; and yet the Chief Consul (as if he had been only amusing

himself with a fleet of cockle-shells) found time to attend to the vast concerns of France and Italy. No wonder it was called ambition: it was power, and so far to be feared! He had hired near Boulogne a small mansion called *Pont de Brique*, on the Paris road. He usually arrived there when the soldiers least expected him, immediately mounted his horse, rode through the camps, and was back again at St. Cloud when he was supposed to be still in the midst of the troops;—or he visited the harbour, spoke to the men, and went down into the basins to ascertain with his own eyes to what depth they had dug since he had been last there. He often took back to dine with him at seven or eight in the evening Admiral Bruix, General Soult, Sganzin, superintendent of the works, Faultrier, inspector of the artillery, and the commissary charged with the supply of provisions; so that before he retired to bed, he knew more of what was going forward than if he had read whole volumes of reports. The coolness of his head seemed to keep pace with the hurry of his movements, and the clearness of his views with the complication of affairs and interests he had to attend to. It was at this period that the army was first divided into separate corps; M. de la Bouillerie, a friend of General Moreau, was appointed paymaster-general. Buonaparte placed great confidence in him, which he afterwards repaid, as so many others did.

While Buonaparte's projected expedition was viewed with various sentiments at home, and was ridiculed by many as childish and extravagant, from a comparison of the gun-boats with the size of British men-of-war, it caused a great deal of bustle and alarm (serious or affected) on this side of the Channel. All our fleets were put into requisition from the Baltic to the Tagus, from the Tagus to the coasts of Sicily. Not a fishing-boat but seemed to have new life put into it, and to prepare for the conflict. Upwards of five hundred ships of war, of various descriptions and sizes, scoured the ocean in different directions. English squadrons blockaded every port in the Channel

or Mediterranean; and our cruisers were either seen scudding over the waters, like seagulls dallying with their native element and hovering near their prey, or stood in and insulted the enemy on his own shores, cutting out his vessels or dismantling his forts. By land the hubbub and consternation was not less. Britain armed from one end to the other to repel the threatened invasion. An army of volunteers sprung up like grasshoppers. Every hill had its horseman: every bush or brake its sharp-shooter. The preparations were not the least active at the greatest distance from the scene of danger. Petitions were put into our liturgy to deliver us from an insolent and merciless foe, who "was about to swallow us up quick;" nor was there a church-door in the remotest corner of Great Britain on which was not posted a call on high and low, rich and poor, to bestir themselves in the common defence, proceeding from Mr. Cobbett's powerful pen; which roused the hopes and fears of the meanest rustic into a flame of martial enthusiasm.

"Victorque Sinon incendia miscet  
Insultans."

There never was a time in which John Bull felt his zeal or courage greater, or felt it so with less expense of real danger. We had all the trappings, the finery, the boastings, and the imaginary triumphs of war, without the tragic accompaniments which were left for others to bear: our spirit of martyrdom was never put to the proof, we had become a nation of heroes without shedding a drop of our blood, and the bug-bear which had made such a noise drew off without a blow being struck on British ground. What a difference between that period and the present!\* France seemed then to rear up and enlarge its vaunted power, as if it would fall upon and crush us: the Revolutionary hydra haunted and took sleep from our eyes; now we can scarcely find its faded form in the map, it is like a cloud in the horizon, or no more

\* Written in 1828.

to us than if it had never existed, or than if the waters of the Channel had rolled their briny ooze over it! France would have troubled us no more than than now, if we could have but been persuaded *to let it alone*.

This state of things continued for nearly two years, which were passed in idle menaces on one side, and vulgar bravado on the other, keeping alive the spirit of rancour and hostility, and inflaming old wounds or opening new ones, till the chance of any cordial reconciliation became as hopeless as any good to be derived from the contest. The new Continental coalition towards the beginning of 1805 broke up the war of words and defiance, by diverting Buonaparte's attention to a quarry more within his grasp; and the battle of Trafalgar put the finishing stroke to the plan of a descent upon our coasts. Buonaparte has been sometimes accused of rashness and extravagance in dreaming of the invasion at all, and at others charged with duplicity in pretending that he ever seriously meditated it. He did not, however, it is clear, trust to his flat-bottomed boats alone for effecting his object. They were merely intended in the last resort to transport the troops, after he had gained the command of the Channel for a few days, by collecting there a larger fleet of French men-of-war than any the English could bring against him at a moment's notice. This event was to be brought about by putting into motion an immense and precarious system of naval tactics and manœuvres, which by their very complexity, secrecy, and the uncertainty of the elements, which must concur in their punctual execution, were almost sure to miscarry. His plan was for the different fleets he could muster (to the amount of fifty or sixty vessels in all) to get out of the harbours where they were blockaded by the English, to rendezvous at Martinique, and the English ships being dispersed in pursuit of them, to set sail back again all at once, and form a junction (together with the Spanish fleet who were by this time at

war with England) off Brest or in Boulogne harbour, so as to make Buonaparte master of the Straits of Dover for three or four days, and thus to enable him to effect the landing of one hundred and sixty thousand men in two thousand flat-bottomed boats prepared for the purpose, and to march immediately to London and take possession of the capital. In fact, in pursuance of an infinite variety of orders, details, and contrivances, the Toulon and Rochfort squadrons under Villeneuve and Miciessy, the one with twenty, the other with six ships, made their escape, rallied at Martinique, and returned to Europe after an action with Admiral Calder, and some delay in consequence of it. The English squadrons before Ferrol and Rochfort finding the enemy had escaped, left those stations, and proceeded to join the Channel fleet before Brest, which then became superior to Admiral Gantheaume's fleet of twenty-one ships, who could not quit the roads of Bertheaume and Brest in order to effect his union with Admiral Villeneuve. The latter at a loss what to do in these new circumstances, and always taking the feeblest course, instead of making direct for Brest according to Napoleon's latest instructions and his own declarations, put into Corunna and afterwards into Ferrol, whence he proceeded to get himself blockaded in Cadiz harbour. This was in the latter end of the summer of 1805. He only went there to fight the well-known battle of Trafalgar, which destroyed the French and Spanish navies, and completely prostrated the reputation of their unfledged commanders before that of the English. In the meantime the delay of Villeneuve in arriving off the mouth of the Channel, and the failure of so many intricate combinations, proved ruinous to the projected expedition against England. It was a vast and unwieldy machine, made up of a number of minute parts and problematical movements, the derangement of any one of which must be nearly fatal to the whole. It must be confessed that this was the weak side of Buonaparte's character (for the excess of

strength always inclines to a degree of weakness) that he sometimes seemed disposed to mistake the number and extent of the means that he called into existence and the clearness and comprehension with which he arranged them, as far as it was possible beforehand, for the final success of the measure, and that his own energy and resolution, both from natural temperament and the confidence of habitual success, made him put the will for the deed ! The very boldness and strength of will which are necessary to great actions, must often defeat them ; for high spirit does not easily bend to circumstances or stoop to prudence. Whatever were his own resources, he could not always command the co-operation of others ; yet his plans were on too large a scale not to require it. Neither was he wrong in attributing his failure to the elements : he was only wrong in building sanguine hopes on schemes which depended on their favourable guidance, or in placing himself at their mercy. It is, however, likely that he had never much stomach for the invasion of this country ; he perhaps thought where nothing could be done, it was as well to make a proportionable display of preparations and an ostentatious career of evasions ; and he turned from it twice, first to venture on his Egyptian expedition, and the second time to hail the sun of Austerlitz.

Neither can I think so poorly of my countrymen (with all my dissatisfaction with them) as to suppose that even if Buonaparte had made good his landing, it would have been all over with us. He might have levelled London with the dust, but he must have covered the face of the country with heaps and *tumuli* of the slain, before this mixed breed of Norman and Saxon blood would have submitted to a second Norman conquest. Whatever may be my opinion of the wisdom of the people, or the honesty of their rulers, I never denied their courage or obstinacy. They do not give in the sooner in a contest for having provoked it. They would not receive a foreign inva-

sion as a visit of courtesy; nor submit to be conquered like a nation of women, hardly complaining of the rudeness. The French alone have arrived at that point of politeness and effeminacy. The English are not a sufficiently theatrical people to disguise the fact of having been beaten, if they had been; and are too sensible of disgrace not to resent it to the death. I cannot pretend to say, to what point of resistance their love of their king or country might carry them; but they have too much hatred of the French ever to submit to them as masters.

Buonaparte's hopes of a favourable reception, or of no very determined resistance in Ireland, were better founded; and one of the alternatives proposed to Villeneuve was to touch on the western coast of Ireland, and leave a detachment of troops there as a cover to the attempts upon England. That country was disaffected to the English government, and torn in pieces by religious and civil discords; and worse usage was resorted to in order to regain its affections than that by which they had been alienated. It had been lately united to England, and its legislative independence abolished by a breach of faith and a mockery of justice, which seemed the order of the day with the British ministry, of which Mr. Pitt was become once more the presiding genius. Two sanguinary rebellions (the issue of which was each time nearly doubtful) had broken out and been crushed by a force of arms and the most odious system of civil treachery and *espionage*. Instead of a desire to heal and remedy what was amiss, there was no wish but to irritate and degrade—to aggravate the injustice and punish the resistance to it—to consider the nation as enemies and subjects at the same time. Ireland was always treated as a conquered province, to be kept in submission by fear and harshness; an illiberal and narrow-minded policy denied it agricultural and commercial advantages, and the difference of faith added religious intolerance to civil persecution. No pains



were taken to instruct or improve; to diffuse comfort or to open the channels for industry, but rather to obstruct them. England was the step-mother of Ireland. That wretched, short-sighted, malevolent system was pursued, which supposed that every advantage gained by Ireland, and every advance she made in civilization and prosperity, was a loss and an injury done to England; instead of that true and enlightened one, equally approved by reason and humanity, which knows and which feels that one state cultivating its natural and peculiar advantages to the utmost can never be a detriment, but must be a benefit to another, while they are united by friendly intercourse and by the bond of a common government. As well might one county of England think to prosper by ruining the husbandry of the adjoining county. Religious differences heightened and inflamed the original grievance; doubled the burdens of the poor; jaundiced their minds, and by throwing them into the hands of the Popish clergy, fostered their ignorance and made the evil hopeless. Sloth, poverty, and a sense of debasement rendered them reckless of consequences, unable to see their way out of them, except by violence and bloodshed; and thus a whole people, by mismanagement and mischievous prejudices, were daily plunged deeper into civil strife or a state of merely animal existence. The example of other countries, and "envy of happier lands," that had asserted their independence, gave the last temptation to their disloyalty; and Ireland about this time hung trembling in the balance between her wavering allegiance to Great Britain and her inclination to accept the overtures to aid her in the recovery of her disputed rights. Buonaparte wished that she should throw herself into the arms of France; but to this the leaders of that party who were desirous to separate Ireland from her union with England, would never consent; and on that understanding they finally parted.\*

\* "When the Catholic question was first seriously agitated," said

It was in the interval here spoken of, immediately after the breaking off of the treaty of Amiens, and while Buonaparte was strengthening and enlarging the foundations of his power, that this country (strange to say) was inundated with theories and elaborate treatises to prove the nullity of all attempts at liberty and the blessings of absolute monarchy. Mr. Malthus's celebrated "Essay on Population," which got into great vogue just at this time, stifled the voice of humanity; and by representing the perfectibility of social institutions as the greatest evil that could happen, from the overwhelming population that would rush in when the restraints of vice and misery were taken away, effectually served to make every gradation towards improvement and approach to liberty and happiness suspected and to be viewed with an instinctive horror and distrust. Dr. Bisset at great length went into the flourishing state of the Romans and the happiness of the world under the latter Emperors; and Mr. Mitford in his "History of Greece" fully exposed the mischiefs of Republics. And all this at a period when the press, the pulpit, the taverns, and the theatre resounded with patriotic appeals and invectives against the strides of the French usurper towards universal dominion. One would have thought these studied and systematic apologies for the evils of war, ambition, and arbitrary government were intended to flatter him and smooth his path to power. Far from it: they were meant to aid and exasperate the popular and party watchwords of the day. For power and prejudice knew full well, with that consistent truth and keeping that belongs to them and that shames the faltering and misguided friends of freedom, that his strongest pretensions and his hold on power were rooted in the illusions of liberty and the progress of liberal principles; and that by blight-

Napoleon, "I would have given fifty millions to be assured, that it would not be granted; for it would have entirely ruined my projects upon Ireland, as the Catholics, if you emancipate them, would become as loyal subjects as the Protestants."—*O'Meara*, vol. i. p. 356.

ing these which were the supports of the new system, they lent the most effectual aid to the antagonist system they wanted to prop up, and by stopping the current of enthusiasm and the hope of public good, let public opinion drift back again unseen, but irrevocably, to that sink of apathy, corruption, and inveterate abuse, which was the haven of their desires, and the bourn from which slavery never returns.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

## CONSPIRACY OF GEORGES, PICHEGRU, AND OTHERS.

Conspiracy of Georges, Pichegru, and others; Georges, Coster, and seven or eight more, executed; Pichegru commits suicide in prison; Captain Wright destroys himself in the Temple; arrest of the Duke d'Enghien; his trial; is condemned; reflections on his execution; its effect on Paris and Europe; Buonaparte's defence of the act.

It should seem that the contest in which England had embarked to restore the Bourbons and overturn the popular government in France, had not only involved a sacrifice of the political principles which had hitherto distinguished us from the rest of the world, but also as the cause became desperate, led to a change in the moral sentiments of the country. In our fits of revenge and disappointment, we had worked ourselves up to regard the enemy opposed to us in mortal strife as wretches, outlaws, traitors, rebels, who were to be got rid of at any price, and we did not scruple to snatch at any means which were calculated to attain so worthy an end, and which were daubed over with the colours of loyalty and patriotism by the passions which suggested them. Mr. Fox had been unwilling to allow that the British cabinet knew anything of the *infernal machine*; perhaps the number and description of persons (some of them the very same) that now continually crossed the channel, and were landed from English cutters on the coast of France, might have staggered him in his opinion, had he had to defend it anew with the First Consul. If in our habitual language and feelings we are determined to consider any one as no better than a mad

dog or a wild beast, we shall before long let our actions slide into the same train. I should not enter into or insist on this view of the subject, but that a hollow tone of moral purity has been made the pretext for undermining the foundations of every species of political liberty, and that I conceive the extreme measures to which England resorted at this period, and the flagrant departure from the blunt and straightforward character to which she laid claim, proved to a demonstration that there was a radical change in her counsels, and that the war had a far deeper and deadlier object at stake (beyond the professed and immediate one) rankling in the hearts of its leaders, and urging them on in a course of infatuation and dishonour.

The original object of the war, whether this were overturning the new form of government or checking the political ascendancy of France, was still as far or farther than ever from its accomplishment. Neither peace nor war seemed to dissolve the power nor to influence the good fortune of the French ruler. We had made peace with him, thinking that he was a mere soldier: finding that he applied himself with equal zeal and success to advancing the prosperity and glory of the Republic in peace, and despairing of ruining him that way, we made war upon him again. We had gained nothing more by this step than to be able to repel and set at defiance the threat of invasion, and we did not talk as yet of returning the compliment. One sign of success, however, is a blind adherence to our purpose in the midst of failure, and a determination not to turn back, though we have not the most distant prospect of ever coming to our journey's end. Though we could not carry the war with broad and open front into France, yet the rupture of the peace of Amiens gave us the opportunity of insinuating plots and conspiracies, and disseminating civil war by the intervention of flights of emissaries sent over from England, and their intrigues with the swarms of emigrants that Buonaparte (after he was chosen Consul) had called home, as if for the very purpose. There was more

in it than this. Buonaparte had become the direct obstacle to peace, that is to the projects of the old governments; he was the main prop of the colossus that was said to threaten the extinction of the civilised world: the power and genius of Republican France were centred in his single person. What scheme then so feasible or so effectual as to cut short the ramifications and intricate knots of conspiracy with the dagger, and to get rid of the obnoxious individual at whom they all pointed, by a side blow or the chance medley of assassination, which it would be easy to lay on the uncontrollable fury of the opposing factions and the desperate designs and characters of the different agents? From the complexion and well-known history of most of these (robbers, outlaws, incendiaries) it is evident that such a catastrophe was likely to happen; and at any rate, it was not the result the least thought of or the most carefully guarded against. Indeed, the dissolute character and reckless fanaticism of these men, who were sent over at imminent risk of their lives, and concealed with the profoundest mystery, so that they could only strike some dark and deadly blow which they would consider as an act of devoted heroism, was the only chance or hope the conspiracy had of success: it had no other means or strength, nor were any risings to be effected in the west, nor the French princes to come forward till the decisive blow had been struck. Mr. Drake and Mr. Spenser Smith, our envoys at Munich and Stuttgard, were busy in carrying on an intrigue with some pretended Jacobin insurgents, offering them money from the English government (who else could give it?) and always pointing out Buonaparte as the great obstacle to success; the Duke D'Enghien was at Ettenheim waiting the event; Pichegru went over from London (where he had been lurking) to sound Moreau, and to gain over the disaffected among the military, and Georges Cadoudal, and other Vendean chiefs, were brought to Paris, and had frequent interviews with the Polignacs,

De La Rivière, and some of the most distinguished emigrants in Paris, to forward the like chivalrous and spirited designs.

Indistinct rumours were for some time afloat as if to prepare the public mind for a great change; and letters were received from London, confidently stating that the First Consul would shortly be arrested in his career. Alarming intelligence was also received of meetings and discourses held by peasants in La Vendée. The First Consul grew uneasy, and determined to search the matter to the bottom. He is said to have had a remarkable *tact* for judging when he was upon a volcano; but this is not wonderful in one (even of less sagacity) who had a knowledge of every circumstance that was passing, and so deep an interest in the event. There was at this time (the beginning of 1804) no ministry of police, that office having been abolished soon after the peace at the suggestion of Talleyrand, as useless and odious, and partly to get rid of the troublesome influence of Fouché, to whom the minister for foreign affairs was by no means friendly. A counsellor of state (M. Real) had the superintendence of everything of this sort, in concert with the grand judge. Trials by councils of war had of late been rare; but there were a number of persons detained in prison as spies or for other political offences. Buonaparte had a list of these laid before him. Among them was a man named Picot, and another named Le Bourgeois, who had been apprehended the foregoing year at Pont-Audemer in Normandy, as coming from England with intent to assassinate the First Consul. They had hitherto been merely kept in prison. They and three others were now ordered to be brought before a commission to be tried. The two first-mentioned refused to answer, and were condemned and shot without making the slightest discovery. They persisted in declaring that the Republic would not survive the war. Their obduracy lessened the pity of the spectators; but not a step had been gained. The other

trials were postponed. A disclosure of the intrigues and manœuvres of the English resident at the court of Wurtemberg took place about this time. The First Consul became very anxious ; and one night, looking over the list of prisoners, saw the name of Querel, who was described as a native of Bas Bretagne, and as having served as a surgeon in the rebel army. He had come to Paris about two months before ; a creditor whom he was unable to pay had given information against him. "This man," said Buonaparte, "is not actuated by enthusiasm, but by the hope of gain, and he will be more likely to confess than the others." He was accordingly tried the next day as a Chouan, and condemned to death ; but as he was led to execution, he demanded to be heard and promised to make important disclosures. He was conducted back to prison, where he made his declarations. He in fact confessed that he had come from England, and had been landed on the coast from Captain Wright's ship in company with Georges, in August 1803. In different nights of August, September, and December 1803, and January 1804, Wright had landed Georges, Pichegru, Rivière, Coster, St. Victor, La Haye, St. Hilaire, and others, at Beville in Normandy. The four last-named had been accomplices in the affair of the *infernal machine* ; and most of the rest were well known to be Chouan chiefs. They remained during the day at a little farmhouse near the place where they had landed ; the proprietor of which had been bribed to assist them. They travelled only by night, pretending to be smugglers, concealing themselves in the daytime in lodgings which had been previously procured for them. They entered Paris singly, where they never went out or showed themselves but when summoned for some particular purpose, and where Georges also lay hid. They had all been landed from an English cutter at the same spot, at the foot of the cliff of Beville near Dieppe, which they ascended by means of the *smuggler's rope*, and were met by a man from Eu or Treport, called Troche,



the son of a watch-maker, who was an old emissary of the party. Savary, with some police-officers, was instantly dispatched to the spot, where he found all the particulars to correspond with the previous statement, and saw an English cutter near the shore, (as it was said, with an illustrious personage on board) but which, on some alarm being given, sheered off.

At the same time an emigrant, named Bouvet de Lozier, was also arrested. After he had been confined for some weeks, he became desperate, and hanged himself in the prison one morning. The gaoler hearing an unusual noise in the room, ran in and cut him down in time.\* While he was recovering his senses, he broke out into incoherent exclamations that Moreau had brought Pichegru from London, that he was a traitor and had persuaded them (the emigrants) that the army were all for him, and that he would prove the cause of their destruction. This excited fresh suspicions. The police knew that a brother of Pichegru, who had been a monk, lived in Paris. He was discovered in an obscure lodging, and being interrogated, owned that he had seen his brother within a few days, and asked, "If it were a crime?" Moreau was arrested on his way from Gros-Bois (his country-house), and large rewards were offered for the apprehension of Pichegru and Georges. Pichegru was betrayed by one of his old friends with whom he lived, and who came to the police and offered to deliver him up for a hundred thousand francs paid on the spot. Pichegru had been received, and was secreted in this man's house somewhere near the barrier of Neuilly, whence he had gone to his different interviews with Moreau. He was a large, powerful man, and the police had some difficulty in seizing him; they rushed upon him while he was asleep, struck out a light which was burning by his bedside, and overturned a table on which his pistols lay. He was carried before the grand judge,

\* Had he succeeded in the attempt, it would probably have been attributed to Buonaparte, and recorded long after among "his other atrocities."

and at first persisted in an absolute denial of any knowledge of the conspiracy, till he had been successively confronted with such of Georges' accomplices as had already been arrested. Georges himself still continued to elude the vigilance of the police. Paris was surrounded with a *cordon* of troops, and the barriers were closed night and day, and only opened for the market-people to pass and repass. The cavalry of the guard and of the garrison furnished guard-posts on the outer Boulevards, and had videttes round the wall inclosing the capital. Continually moving from one towards the other, the latter formed permanent patrols, having orders to apprehend every one who should seek to gain the country by scaling the walls. Paris remained in this state of gloomy alarm, presenting the aspect of a city in a state of siege, for nearly three weeks. At the end of that period, Georges was betrayed and taken, having first shot one of the men employed to arrest him. He was discovered in a cabriolet, in which, after being driven from hiding-place to hiding-place, and shunned by all his associates, he had passed the last two days in riding about Paris, and meant to have attempted his escape from it, just as he was seized. Such is the state of harassing anxiety and desperation to which these men were led in the first instance by a strong principle of party spirit, which had no other support or encouragement to carry it through to the very jaws of agony and death than the love of violent excitement, and the sense of the depth of the stake that was played for! It was in itself no very enviable situation for Georges to be in, to be an object of execration and vengeance to a whole city; what then hardened him against compunction or remorse? It was the reflection that he had been able to throw a whole city into consternation, and might yet baffle his pursuers. The resolution of such men is strengthened instead of being weakened by the mischief they have done, even though it has recoiled upon themselves; the mind is happily relieved from the sense of insig-

nificance ; nor can they be bribed, by any temptation, to keep their hands off the wires and pulleys that move such mighty levers, and lead to the convulsion of states. Georges is described as a man of great courage and activity, brutal and ignorant, and deaf to everything but his own rooted prejudices. Buonaparte, after the establishment of the consulship, tried to win him over, but in vain. He told him, that even if he succeeded in restoring the Bourbons, they would only look upon him as a peasant, a miller's son. Georges probably thought himself that he was only a miller's son. The fanatic bows down before his idol, without asking what the object of his homage thinks of him ! Georges then went over to England, where he became a confidential spy and agent of the Bourbons. He and his confederates underwent a public trial in the month of May (1804), before the tribunal of the department of the Seine, and in the presence of all the foreign ambassadors. Georges, Polignac, Rivière, Coster, and sixteen or seventeen others were found guilty, on the clearest evidence, and by the confession of several among them, of having conspired against the life of the First Consul and the safety of the Republic, and were condemned to death.\* Georges and Coster, with seven or eight more, were executed.

\* The court was deeply affected on witnessing the generous fraternal combat which took place during the last sitting but one, between the two Polignacs. The emotion was general when the eldest of the two brothers, after having declared that his going out alone and during the day did not look like a conspirator anxious for concealment, added these words, "I have now only one wish, which is, that as the sword is suspended over our heads, and threatens the existence of several of the accused, you would, in consideration of his youth, if not of his innocence, spare my brother, and upon me let fall the whole weight of your vengeance !" On the following day, before the fatal sentence was pronounced, M. Jules de Polignac addressed the court, saying, "I was so deeply affected yesterday by the discourse of my brother, that I was not able to give my attention so as to be able to make a proper reply, but as I am now perfectly tranquil, I entreat gentlemen, that you will not regard what he urged in my behalf. I repeat on the contrary, and with more justice, if one of us must become a sacrifice, if there is yet time, save him :—restore him to the tears of his wife ; I am single. Like him I can meet death unappalled,—too young to have tasted the pleasures

Rivière was pardoned at the particular instigation of Murat, whom he repaid with ingratitude, and is said in 1815 to have set a price upon his head. Buonaparte pardoned some of the others, particularly the Marquis Polignac, at the instance of his wife. Moreau was condemned to two years' imprisonment, which was commuted to banishment to America. M. Jules de Polignac, confidant of the Count d'Artois, and some others, were also sentenced to imprisonment. Pichegru killed himself in prison, while the trials were going on.

The object of this conspiracy, which had excited so much expectation, which had set so many engines at work, and the crushing of which seemed to have put an end to similar attempts from the same quarter, appears to have been first to tamper with and gain over the army by means of the disaffected generals; and then, having got rid of Buonaparte by a *coup de main*, which would have cost nothing to some of the most stirring and trust-worthy of the actors in the plot (as it was judiciously cast to embrace all kinds of characters) to march with them to Paris and proclaim the Bourbons. This notable scheme, on which expense and lives were lavished in proportion to its wildness and profligacy, failed (as it was just ripe for execution) through the indecision or dormant ambition of Moreau, whose "half-faced fellowship" was the pivot on which it turned. He had long been a malcontent; and was marked out by temperament and circumstances to

of life, I cannot regret their loss."—"No, no," exclaimed his brother, "you are still in the outset of your career, it is I who ought to suffer."

At eight in the morning the members of the tribunal withdrew to the council-chamber. Since the commencement of the trial, the crowd, in place of diminishing, seemed each day to increase, and on this morning, although the sentence was not expected until a late hour, no one quitted the court lest he should be unable to find a place when the court resumed its sitting. Sentence of death was passed upon Georges Cadoudal, Bouvet de Lozier, Rusillon, Rochelle, Armand de Polignac, Charles d'Hosier, de Rivière, Louis Ducorps, Picot, Lajolais, Roger, Coster-Saint Victor, Deville, Galliard, Joyaut, Burban, Lemercier, Jean Cadoudal, Lelan, and Merille.

figure as a marplot. The soundness of his principles had been more than doubted ever since the defection of Pichegru in 1797, whose correspondence with the enemy he kept a secret for several months (when his silence might have been fatal to his country), and afterwards, when the correspondence was discovered by other means, affected to denounce and set it in the most glaring light, thus showing an equal disregard to public or private obligation. Nothing saved Moreau from general reprobation and contempt for his conduct on this occasion but the natural mildness and indolence of his disposition; it not being sufficiently considered that men without bad or mischievous passions themselves are often made the easiest and most dangerous tools of the sinister designs of others. He never relished Buonaparte. This was natural enough, both from the competition between them as to military reputation and from the opposition of their characters. Moreau had no pretensions out of the field of battle; and he hated and affected to condemn Buonaparte for having pushed on in a career, for which he himself possessed neither talents, acquirements, nor inclination. During the whole of the Consulate, his conduct was that of the dog in the fable. His cynical affectation of simplicity was wounded pride; and there was too much of petty spleen and sullen mortification in the expression of his dissent not to be attributed to personal pique and disappointment rather than to manly reason or public principle. Diogenes was said to trample on Plato's pride with greater pride. Moreau was one of those common-place characters who do not see beyond themselves or beyond certain vague generalities, who have not vigour enough to understand the departure from approved forms required on great occasions, or magnanimity enough to applaud the success. He had not sufficient attachment to the rule to reconcile him to the exception. He could sooner pardon those who had ruined the country by technical imbecility, than those who had saved it by boldness and decision. He could not

adopt the words of the poet in addressing one who resembled the warrior and statesman who first suggested them—

“ Still as you rise, the state exalted too,  
Finds no distemper while 'tis changed by you.”

He would more willingly have it run to waste by incapacity, or trampled in the dust by the opposite party, than that one of his own should have the glory of delivering or reconstructing it. It was not the advancement or depression of the commonweal that he cared about, but his own share in the event, or whether he occupied the topmost round in fortune's ladder. This is the case with the Moderates and Precisians in all times and places. They had endured Robespierre, because he had not shocked their self-love; and on the other hand, that he did so, was with them Buonaparte's *sin against the Holy Ghost*. Moreau lent his assistance to the General of Italy on the 18th of Brumaire; but seemed soon sick of the success of that enterprise. His spleen broke out in spite of himself. On one occasion, Carnot had made the First Consul a present of a pair of pistols richly mounted: Moreau entered the room soon after, when Buonaparte said, “ This is well; for here comes Moreau, who will honour me by accepting them.” Moreau took them sullenly, and without a word of acknowledgment. Napoleon asked him to the public dinners, which he declined attending; so that at last the First Consul desisted from the attempt: “ He has refused me twice,” he said, “ he shall not do so a third time. He will one of these days run his head against the pillars of the Tuileries; but I wash my hands of him.” When the legion of honour was established, and it was proposed to extend it beyond the military to men of science and merit of every description, Moreau said with a sneer, “ Then I will propose my cook as a candidate; for he is very skilful and a person of great merit in the science of cookery”—thus by his very petulance and the narrowness of his views showing

his unfitness to censure others. He was led away by his wife (a *Mademoiselle Hullin*), a Creole, whom he had married at the recommendation of Josephine. Her mother (*Madame Hullin*) gave herself such airs afterwards, that Talleyrand was once actually obliged to interfere to prevent her taking precedence of *Madame Buonaparte*; and she used to say that the wife of the First Consul ought to have been a woman like her daughter and not a *ganon* like Josephine. It was a misfortune to Moreau, as Buonaparte shrewdly observed, to be governed in this manner; for in that case a man is neither himself nor his wife, but nothing. Both she and her mother were violent Royalists, full of intrigue, which they carried on with that foolhardiness, which in women arises from a mixture of vanity, feebleness, and the sense of impunity. Independently of this circumstance, it may seem strange that Moreau, who quarrelled with Buonaparte for not being sufficiently republican, should have gone over to the Royalist side in revenge. But the truth is, that *Royalist* or *Republican* often signifies nothing more than the necessity of belonging to some party that has strong prejudices and large numbers to support it; and that the mind veers from one side to the other, according to circumstances, to save thought and exertion.

Moreau had for some time lived retired at his estate of Gros-Bois, which was the rendezvous of the discontented military or of intriguing royalists. He affected to hold himself aloof from the actual government, but did not set up any particular claims of his own. It is, however, difficult for a man to remain long neuter who is courted by one party, and who is averse to the other. It was thought that he could give a turn to the sentiments of the military at the present juncture; and it was also conceived, that he and Pichegru could not better patch up their old friendship, which had been broken off by the untimely discovery of a former plot, than by concerting a new

treason. Lajolais, an aide-de-camp and private secretary of Moreau at the time of Pichegru's correspondence with Kinglin, was made the go-between. He went to London with various overtures, where he saw the Count d'Artois at Pichegru's lodgings. Pichegru came over some time after. He had several meetings with Moreau by stealth, and with considerable backwardness on the part of the latter. The first time was on the Boulevards. He went one evening in a hackney-coach with Georges, accompanied by Lajolais, and Picot, a trusty servant of Georges, to the Boulevard de la Madeleine, where Lajolais alighted, and went to fetch General Moreau from his house in the Rue d'Anjou close by; Pichegru and Georges then alighted and walked about with General Moreau for some time, while Picot and Lajolais waited in the coach. As they returned to the coach, Georges' servant heard Pichegru observe to his master, speaking of Moreau—"It seems that fellow has ambition too!" This account which was at first given by Picot was confirmed by Lajolais. Georges' servant did not know who Lajolais or Pichegru was. It came out on the earliest examination of Georges' associates, that a tall, respectable-looking man, whom they did not know, bald and of the middle age, attended their meetings, that he was received uncovered, and treated with the greatest respect. It was conjectured that this must be one of the French princes; and as from the age it could neither be the Count d'Artois nor the Duke of Berri, suspicion fell upon the Duke d'Enghien, who was on the nearest frontier, and whom other depositions stated to be busily occupied with similar transactions. This led to his arrest and death. The mysterious stranger afterwards turned out to be Pichegru, who was not known to Georges' people; from his having been landed at a different period and having come to Paris with Lajolais alone. In the interview with Moreau above described, it appeared the latter had agreed that the first thing to be done



was to remove the First Consul ; that after this something might be done with the army ; but instead of wishing to restore the Bourbons, he talked of bringing back the Republican party and placing himself at the head of it. This enraged Georges, who said that "*Blue for blue*\* he would prefer the one, who was already at the head of the government." Georges declared that his plan was ripe, and that he would take off the Chief Consul by such a day ; but he would only do so as a preliminary step to the proclaiming of Louis XVIII. Moreau upon this broke off the conference, and told Pichegru "he would have no more to do with that brute." The instinct of the savage seemed in this instance truer than the reasonings of the renegade. When questioned on the trial as to the particulars of their meeting, Georges constantly answered—"I don't know what you mean," and Moreau denied having ever seen Georges. It was the death of Pichegru, whose evidence was wanted to prove this point, that saved Moreau. Pichegru also went once to see him at his own house, and had by mistake opened the door of a room full of company ; but was recognised by Madame Moreau just in time to invent some excuse for the accident, and to prevent his betraying himself. These delays and disagreements among the parties concerned gave time for the discovery of the extensive conspiracy that had been formed, and made it "like a devilish engine back recoil upon itself." There can be no doubt that Moreau was privy, and lent his countenance to the design of overturning the existing state of things by the death of the First Consul ; but with the nearer prospect of the removal of his rival, his own ambition rose on the fancied ruin of another, and his hesitation and lurking distaste to the Bourbons proved fatal to the whole scheme. Moreau had not courage to be a usurper ; honesty to be a patriot ; nor even sufficient loyalty to be a traitor !

\* The Revolutionists were called *blues*, and the Royalists *whites*.

Pichegru died in prison by his own hand.\* Buona-parte, when he heard of it, said—"This is a pretty

\* Being at the Tuileries one morning, about eight o'clock, I received a note from the officer of the gendarmerie, who that day commanded the guard posted at the Temple. He informed me that General Pichegru had just been found dead in his bed; and that this had occasioned a great bustle in the Temple, where they were expecting some one from the police, to which intelligence of the circumstance had been sent.

This officer communicated the fact to me, as well on account of its singularity, as because I had made it a rule, in the corps which I commanded, that all the officers employed in any duty whatever should give me an account of what they had done, seen, or heard during the twenty-four hours. I forwarded this note to the First Consul: he sent for me, supposing that I had further particulars; but as I had none, he sent me to make inquiries, saying, "This is a pretty end for the conqueror of Holland."

I arrived at the same time as M. Real, who came, on behalf of the grand judge, to learn the particulars of this event. I went with M. Real, the keeper, and the surgeon of the prison, straight to General Pichegru's room, and I knew him again very well, though his face was turned of a crimson colour, from the effect of strangulation.

His room was on the ground floor, and the head of his bed against the window, so that the seat served to set his light upon, for the purpose of reading in bed. On the outside there was a sentinel placed under this window, through which he might easily, upon occasion, see all that was passing in the room.

General Pichegru was lying on his right side: he had put round his neck his own black silk cravat, which he had previously twisted like a small rope; this must have occupied him so long as to afford time for reflection, had he not been resolutely bent on self-destruction. He appeared to have tied his cravat, thus twisted, about his neck, and to have at first drawn it as tight as he could bear it, then to have taken a piece of wood, of the length of a finger, which he had taken from a branch that yet lay in the middle of the room (part of a fagot), the remains of which were still in his fire-place; this he must have slipped between his neck and his cravat, on the right side, and turned around till the moment reason forsook him. His head had fallen back on the pillow and compressed the little bit of stick, which had prevented the cravat from untwisting. In this situation strangulation could not fail to supervene. His hand was still under his head, and almost touched this little tourniquet.

On the night-table was a book open, and with its back upward, as if laid down for a moment by one who had been interrupted while reading. M. Real found this book to be the Seneca which he had sent to him; and he remarked, that it was open at that passage where Seneca says that the man, who is determined to conspire, ought above all things not to fear death. This was probably the last thing read by General Pichegru, who, having placed himself in a situation to lose his life on the scaffold, or under the necessity of having recourse to the clemency of the First Consul, had preferred dying by his own hand!—*Bourrienne.*

end for the conqueror of Holland." Besides the First Consul's respect for his military talents, he had been his old tutor at Brienne—and yet, in the rage of heaping every kind of absurdity and atrocity on the character of the French ruler, nothing would serve but to charge him with having had Pichegru dispatched by his orders in prison—and this at the very time when he had shown equal magnanimity and moderation in pardoning the Polignacs, and letting Moreau escape contrary to his deserts, whether we consider his conduct at this crisis or the use he made of his liberty afterwards. Even the pages that still record these acts of clemency are interlarded with alternate charges of open and secret murder, as if to let the ferment in the lees of ancient prejudice subside by degrees, and keep up an affected balance between calumny and candour. If Moreau had been found dead in prison, something might have been said for it; for Moreau was set up as a rival to him and might be dangerous: yet he relinquished his hold of this man (and even furnished him with the sums necessary for him to repair to the United States\*) to wreak his revenge, as we are told, upon one who neither had done nor could do him harm, and whose life (if he thirsted for it) was in a course of forfeiture by the law. Is it nothing that Pichegru contemplated this as the end of his career, death with infamy, and was willing to elude the stroke of the law by anticipating it? Suicide is so far from being improbable in such circumstances, that it is judged necessary to remove from felons and convicts the means of self-destruction. To say nothing of the remorse or sense of dishonour which Pichegru might have felt, he could not have been indifferent to the utter confusion and overthrow of schemes to which he had sacrificed everything; and nothing leads sooner to a violent

\* Buonaparte bought Moreau's estate of Gros-Bois, and his house in the Rue d'Anjou; he gave the first to Berthier, and the last to Bernadotte, in whose hands it still continued the focus of designs against him.

end than a strong purpose defeated. That several things of the same kind followed about the same time is naturally accounted for, from the circumstance that at this period of convulsion and civil strife, many persons were placed in the most trying situations, where their minds being over-wrought by varying hopes and fears, could neither brook their own blighted prospects nor the triumph of their adversaries. More convincing evidence came out against Pichegru every day, and for some time he had sought for the consolation of books. He was a strong man and could not have fallen without a struggle; his body was publicly exposed, and there were no marks of violence upon it; his death was effected by petty, mechanical means, to which an assassin would not have resorted; Georges Cadoudal lay in the next room, who would have heard any unusual stir; a sentinel was placed in the outer passage, into which both their apartments opened, and another was stationed before Pichegru's window in the Temple-garden, so that a deed of this nature could not have been perpetrated without the knowledge of several persons, who would not have kept it long secret. However devoid of probability or common sense, the story strengthened our prejudices against Buonaparte, and that was sufficient to make it pass current. It had no other foundation whatever.

Captain Wright, while the trials were pending, was shipwrecked on the coast of Vannes, and brought to the Temple with some of his crew, when they were recognised as the same who had landed Georges and the rest in Normandy. Captain Wright was examined before the court, but declined answering any questions, as it might implicate his Majesty's ministers; by that alone implicating them in a connexion with Vendéans and Chouans (taken over in vessels belonging to the royal navy) which they always disclaimed as lustily and modestly as they did all knowledge of Mr. Drake's transactions with Meheé de Latouche. Mr. Pitt was not a man who would ever think of pleading guilty

to what could not be proved against him, or whose well-rounded and self-conscious style did not always leave him in convenient possession of some mental reservation which made the practical truth or falsehood of the statement a matter of perfect indifference. Captain Wright was detained not as a spy (as he might have been) but as a prisoner of war, in the hope that he might throw some light on the degree of understanding between the Vendéans and the English government. He lingered in the Temple till the end of 1805, when he put an end to his existence after reading the account of the capitulation of Mack at Ulm. This was when Buonaparte was engaged in the campaign of Austerlitz; and he is accused of having sent secret orders from that field of glory, and from a distance of three hundred leagues, to dispatch an obscure English lieutenant, from a paltry grudge he bore him as the friend of Sir Sidney Smith and his companion at the siege of Acre. This was grossly to misunderstand the character of a man who always proportioned his esteem for an enemy to the valour he had shown, and who had a column of wounded Austrians drawn up before him, whom he saluted, saying, "Honour and respect to the unfortunate brave!" We attribute our own vindictive passions and narrow views to others, and then deduce the most villanous actions from motives which exist only in our own angry bosoms or morbid apprehensions. Buonaparte, in fact, instead of being that monster of cruelty and revenge that our fears or hatred had painted him, was of too easy and buoyant a temperament, not mindful of his danger, not straining his advantages, and relying too much on his own great actions and the admiration of mankind, to the neglect of those means of safety to which malice or cowardice might otherwise have prompted him.\*

\* Palm is another of the Saints and Martyrs of the new legitimate calendar, who was shot by order of Davoust for instigating the inhabitants of the district while under military occupation to assassinate the French soldiers. Buonaparte hardly knew of it; yet to judge

The only instance in which he struck a severe and stunning blow was one into which he was led in the outset by a mistake and by some studied management ; and which would probably have never come to anything but for an intercepted letter—I mean the arrest and condemnation of the Duke d'Enghien. I have no wish to qualify that affair, nor do I quail at its mention. If it were to do over again, and I were in Buonaparte's place, it should be done twice over. To those who think that persons of royal blood have a right to shed your blood by the most violent and nefarious means, but that you have no right to transgress the smallest form to defend yourself, I have nothing to say: to others, the question nearly decides itself. This was the third attempt to assassinate the First Consul in the space of two years ; and it was high time that he should look to himself and assert his place and manhood, by bringing the question to an equal issue with those who thought to pour out his blood like ditch-water ; and that he must perforce (under the spell of names and sacrilegious awe) bare his breast to the poniards of hired stabbers and desperados sent to dispatch him without the possibility of retaliating on the principals. The indispensable blow was struck: a Bourbon fell ; they found themselves vulnerable through the double fence of pride and prejudice ; their dread of the repetition of any similar attempt upon themselves was as strong as their disregard of every other tie ; and from that time the annual flight of these bands of harpies, screaming and preparing to pounce upon their destined prey, ceased. The affair proceeded (it is true) under a cloud which has never been rightly cleared up, as to the degree or nature of the Duke's participation in Georges' conspiracy (for those who are involved in such sinister transactions cannot expect all the benefit of light) : but the sentence rested upon a no less

from the accounts circulated, one would suppose he had superintended the execution in person, and was actuated by personal malice against the man.

lofty though giddy height of justice and policy, and vindicated itself by the event. It was contrary to forms, I grant ; but all forms had been previously and notoriously dispensed with by the opposite party, and an appeal shamelessly made to mere force, fraud, and terror.

Georges was of course known to be merely a principal instrument in the plot, its hand, not its head : and the question was, for whom or in whose name he would have acted the day following that on which he should have dispatched the First Consul. It was naturally concluded that a more important person was concealed somewhere, and waiting for the blow to be struck before he made himself known. Search was made everywhere, but in vain. At length, two of Georges' people being interrogated (as we have already seen), declared that every ten or twelve days there came to their master a gentleman whose name they did not know, about thirty-four or thirty-five years of age, with light hair, bald forehead, of a good height, and rather corpulent. They stated that he was always well dressed, and concluded him to be a person of consequence, as their master always went to the door to receive him ; when he was in the room, everybody, Messrs. de Polignac \* and Rivière as well as the others, rose and did not sit down again till he had retired ; and whenever he came to see Georges, they went together into a cabinet, where they remained alone till he went away, and then Georges attended him to the door. This afterwards turned out to be Pichegru ; but nobody suspected him at the time. Curiosity and anxiety were raised to the highest pitch to learn who this stranger could be whom Georges and his accomplices treated with such respect. It was imagined it could be no other than one of the

\* It appears by this that the Polignacs (the confidential friends of Count d'Artois) were in the constant habit of seeing Georges at his own house ; yet neither the Count d'Artois nor the English ministry (it is said) who had sent them over, knew anything of the designs of this gang of cut-throats and banditti !

princes. The search was renewed with redoubled ardour, and inquiries set on foot whether any scouring and cleaning were going forward in any of the apartments with gilt ceilings in the hotels of the Marais or the Faubourg St. Germain, which had long been uninhabited ; but nothing was discovered. The description given answered neither to the age of the Count d'Artois nor with the person of the Duke of Berri, whom, besides, Georges' people knew. The Duke d'Angoulême was at Mittau with the Pretender ; the Duke of Bourbon in London. There remained only the Duke d'Enghien ; and on him the bolt fell. The First Consul scarcely recollected the name when it was mentioned ; but he was known to be a prince of daring and resolution, not likely to be inactive when "the chase" of kingdoms "was a-foot." He had been for some time residing at Ettenheim, on the right bank of the Rhine, whither since the late events numbers of emigrants had repaired daily. It was alleged that he went every week to the theatre at Strasburg, though he would hardly risk his life without some further object than a play ; and it was calculated that he could just go and come to Paris and back again to his place of retreat, in the interval between the appearance and re-appearance of the stranger who visited Georges. This coincidence determined the First Consul. He immediately signed and issued the orders for the seizure of the duke. "This," he said, "is beyond a jest. To come from Ettenheim to Paris to plot an assassination, and to fancy one's-self safe because one is behind the Rhine ! I should be a fool to suffer it." This step was determined on in a Council where the two other Consuls, the minister for foreign affairs, Fouché, and the grand-judge were present, and where Cambacères opposed the forcible seizure in a neutral territory (that of Baden) saying it would be better to wait till the duke repeated his alleged visits to the capital ; but this objection was overruled by Talleyrand.

A long conversation ensued, in which the First



Consul collected the voices which had supported the opinion of the minister for foreign affairs; and leaving the council, went to his cabinet, where he dictated the necessary orders to his secretary (Maret) for the apprehension of the Duke d'Enghien. The minister at war in consequence ordered General Ordener to go to Nieu Brisach; and on his arrival there, with the *gendarmérie* to be placed at his disposal, and a detachment of cavalry belonging to the garrison, to cross the Rhine at the ferry of Rhinau, to proceed expeditiously to the residence of the Duke d'Enghien at Ettenheim, to take him prisoner,\* and to send him to Paris with all his papers, in hopes of finding amongst them some positive information concerning his connexion with the present conspiracy. The order (which was dated the 10th of March) was forthwith punctually executed; and to meet the remonstrances which the Elector of Baden was likely to make, it was briefly intimated to him by Talleyrand that he must remove that band of emigrants which had once more made its appearance on the banks of the Rhine.

The Duke d'Enghien was seized on the 15th of March, 1804, and carried the same day to the citadel of Strasburg, where he remained till the 18th, when he set out for Paris under the escort of the *gendarmérie*. There he arrived on the 20th of March about eleven in the forenoon: his carriage, after being detained at the barrier till four o'clock, was driven by the outer Boulevards to Vincennes, where the prince was kept prisoner. The commission appointed to try him met that same evening. It consisted of seven officers of regiments of the garrison of Paris, with the commandant General Hullin as their president, who were no otherwise prejudiced against the prisoner than from the general indignation which they felt in common with others against the late conspiracy, and all those who might be supposed to have instigated or to be concerned in it. The commission

\* The order included Dumouriez, who was supposed to be with him.

assembled late in the evening in one of the large rooms of the inhabited part of the castle, which was mostly in ruins, viz., the building over the gate of entrance on the side next the park. The trial was not secret, as had been pretended; it was open to all who could come at that hour of the night, and Savary, who was there to take command of the troops, remarks that there were many persons present, as he could with difficulty get through the crowd. He had in the morning received a letter addressed by Napoleon to Murat (the governor of Paris) who gave him the necessary order to collect the detachments of infantry and cavalry of the garrison at Vincennes.

At the time that Savary entered, the reading of the examination was finished: the discussion upon it had begun and was very warm. The Duke d'Enghien had already answered so sharply that it was clear he had no notion of the danger in which he stood. "Sir," said the President to him, "you seem not to be aware of your situation; or you are determined not to answer the questions which I put to you. You shut yourself up in your high birth, of which you take good care to remind us; you had better adopt a different line of defence. I will not take an undue advantage of your situation, but observe that I ask you positive questions, and that instead of answering you talk to me about something else. Take care, this might become serious. How could you hope to persuade us that you were so completely ignorant as you pretend to be of what was passing in France, when not only the country in which you resided, but the whole world, was informed of it? And how could you persuade me that with your birth you were indifferent to events, all the consequences of which were to be in your favour? There is too much improbability in this for me to pass it over without observation: I beg you to reflect upon it, that you may have recourse to other means of defence." The Duke d'Enghien replied in a grave tone, "Sir, I perfectly comprehend you: it was not my intention to have remained indifferent to

them. I had applied to England for an appointment in her armies, and she had returned for answer that she had none to give me, but that I was to remain upon the Rhine, where I should soon have a part to act, and for that I was waiting. I have nothing more to tell you, sir."

The Duke d'Enghien was tried and found guilty of the three several charges preferred against him : 1. of having served in the armies of the Prince de Condé (his grandfather) and other foreign corps against France ; 2. of having been and being still in the pay of England ; 3. of being privy to and waiting to avail himself of the success of the present conspiracy against the government and the life of the First Consul. The two first were proved by his confession, and were indeed notorious ; of the third and last charge, though nothing showed the contrary, there was not sufficient proof ; and indeed the chief ground on which it had rested fell to the ground when it was discovered soon after that the individual who visited Georges, and who had been imagined to be the Prince, was Pichegru. Before signing the paper containing his sentence, he earnestly requested an interview with the First Consul : a letter had been previously transmitted from the duke which was not received till after his death. His sentence was carried into execution almost immediately after it was passed ; he was shot in the castle ditch at Vincennes, about six in the morning of the 21st.

There appears to have been something mysterious, hurried, and as it were preconcerted in the manner of his death. It is not improbable that Buonaparte would have pardoned him, had he received his letter in time ; or had care been taken to inform him of the exact circumstances of the case. It is certain that the seizure of his person had been made under a strong impression that he was an active and prime mover in the meetings and plans of the Chouans for taking the First Consul's life : and had this been proved to be the case, assuredly not twenty neutralities of Baden

nor his being twenty times a Bourbon ought to have screened or saved him. Otherwise, a robber is safe who has escaped into a neighbour's garden ; or if I see an assassin aiming at me from an opposite window, I am not to fire at him lest I should damage my neighbour's house. It is the more probable that an active and important share in the conspiracy (supposing the first step to have succeeded) was allotted to him, because the Duke of Berri was expected to land with Georges' crew just before, and the same fate was prepared for him. But what in the former case was a dictate of natural and universal justice superior to forms or calculations, became without this a matter of state policy and hard necessity. If the duke had merely served in the former wars against France, that was an old story ; or if he was about to engage in new attempts upon her soil, and these were to be carried on by the regular and approved modes of warfare, then there would have been no sufficient ground for Buonaparte to go out of his way to seek satisfaction from an enemy whom he could meet on equal and honourable terms elsewhere. But the persons with whom the duke was confessedly still in league resorted to other means than those of open hostility, and he had no method of defending himself against them, or of wresting these unfair weapons from their hands, but by making reprisals and setting a dreadful example to show that such unprincipled conduct would come home to themselves. Not to retaliate when he could was to encourage them and give them impunity in the foulest practices ; he had a hostage within his reach and in his hands, and to make him pay the forfeit of insulted honour and faith and restore in so far the balance of both, was not a murder but a sacrifice. The duke was of illustrious blood, it is true, or he would not have been a Bourbon ; he was said to be gallant and brave, but he was connected by a common cause and by the ties of near relationship with those who did not scruple to call the bandit and the assassin to their aid : the blow was not aimed at him, but at

pretensions which assumed a haughty paramountship to the laws both of nature and nations ; and though the example might be a lamentable one, yet the guilt did not lie at the door of those who exacted the penalty, but of his own party, who had rendered it necessary by keeping no measures with those whom they chose to regard as outlaws and rebels. Why, if the prince knew nothing of the secret machinations that were going on, or was not ready to avail himself of the catastrophe, was he found hovering on the borders, as it were dallying with temptation and danger ? It will be said that it was a natural yearning to be near his native soil, as some have returned from banishment to lay down their heads on the block from an unutterable fondness for the place of their birth. It may be answered that the same desire to be near his country at the risk of his life might make him willing to return to it with the loss of personal honour as well as of his country's independence. The question seems to lie in a small compass and may be made clearer by being brought back to ourselves. A man is found lurking near a house while a gang of robbers, of whom he is one of the chiefs, enter it by stealth and are proceeding to murder the inmates. What does he do there ? Is his saying that he is a gentleman by birth, bold, or that he disapproves entirely of what is passing, to shelter him ? Or is his having escaped into the adjoining premises to make him safe from pursuit ? If I am attacked by main force, it is said I must appeal to the law ; but if the law is not at hand to protect me, I take it into my own hands, and shoot a highwayman or housebreaker. Lastly, in all cases of reprisal, it is not the individual who is culpable or supposed to approve the original provocation ; but he is made answerable for his party as the only way of putting a stop to the continuance of some flagrant injustice. There was an objection to the mixture of violence and law in the case, which gave a doubtful complexion to it ; but the trial was of little other use than to identify the prisoner and take the public responsibility of the act. It was an extreme

and deliberate exercise of a vigour beyond the law. It should be remembered also that this example was made while the examination of the conspirators was pending, and while the chiefs of the plot, Georges and Pichegru, were yet undiscovered. Terror and doubt hung over the decision; nor is it improbable that the dismay it excited and the energy it displayed prevented the blow which Buonaparte directed against the Duke d'Enghien from falling on his own head.

The death of the Duke d'Enghien caused a great sensation in Paris and Europe. Though it might require strength of mind and iron nerves to withstand the first shock and the long-continued reverberations of calumny and misrepresentation, yet this was so far from being a reason against the measure, that it was its main object to dispel that very prejudice on which this outcry was founded, and which did not arise because the blood of a prince had been shed unjustly, but because the blood of a prince had been shed. It was necessary to "make these odds even" in the struggle which was at issue, or to give it up altogether. It was one among the few answers which have been given to the idle and insolent pretension that the blood of common men is puddle, and that of nobles and princes a richer flood, which cannot be weighed against the former any more than wine against water. Those who were principally interested in holding up this distinction, and had till now acted upon it to the most unlimited extent, finding it no longer avail them, took the hint and were more cautious in guarding so precious a deposit from being let out from noble veins. The Emperor Alexander, among others, assumed a lofty tone on the occasion, which was brought down by Talleyrand's asking him in an official note, "Whether if a set of English assassins had been hired to effect his father's death, the Russian cabinet would not have thought itself authorised to seize and punish them though they had been lurking four leagues from the Russian territory?" This home-thrust was never parried either by Alexander or by the standing retainers on that side of the ques-

tion. Finally, let us hear what Buonaparte himself says on the point. The following appeal is frank and cogent.

"If I had not had in my favour the laws of my country to punish the culprit, I should still have had the right of the law of nature, of legitimate self-defence. The duke and his party had constantly but one object in view, that of taking away my life : I was assailed on all sides and at every instant ; air-guns, infernal machines, plots, ambuscades of every kind, were resorted to for that purpose. At last I grew weary and took an opportunity of striking them with terror in their turn in London ; I succeeded, and from that moment there was an end to all conspiracies. Who can blame me for having acted so ? What ! Blows threatening my existence are aimed at me day after day, from a distance of one hundred and fifty leagues ; no power on earth, no tribunal can afford me redress ; and I am not to be allowed to use the right of nature and return war for war ! What man, unbiassed by party feeling, possessing the smallest share of judgment or justice, can take upon him to condemn me ? On what side will he not throw blame, odium, and criminal accusations ? Blood for blood ; such is the natural, the inevitable, and infallible law of retaliation : woe to him who provokes it ! Those who foment civil dissensions or excite political commotions expose themselves to become the victims of them. It would be a proof of imbecility or madness to imagine and pretend that a whole family should have the strange privilege to threaten my existence, day after day, without giving me the right of retaliation ; they could not reasonably pretend to be above the law to destroy others, and claim the benefit of it for their own preservation : the chances must be equal. I had never personally offended any of them ; a great nation had chosen me to govern them ; almost all Europe had sanctioned their choice ; my blood, after all, was not ditch-water ; it was time to place it on a par with theirs. And what if I had

carried retaliation further? I might have done it: the disposal of their destiny, the heads of every one of them, from the highest to the lowest, were more than once offered me; but I rejected the proposal with indignation. Not that I thought it would be unjust for me to consent to it in the situation to which they had reduced me; but I felt so powerful, I thought myself so secure, that I should have considered it a base and gratuitous act of cowardice. My great maxim has always been that in war as well as in politics every evil action, even if legal, can only be excused in case of absolute necessity: whatever goes beyond that is criminal.

"It would have been ridiculous in those who violated so openly the law of nations, to appeal to it themselves. The violation of the territory of Baden, of which so much has been said, is entirely foreign to the main point of the question. The law of the inviolability of territory has not been devised for the benefit of the guilty, but merely for the preservation of the independence of nations and of the dignity of the sovereign. It was therefore for the Elector of Baden, and for him alone, to complain, and he did not; he yielded, no doubt, to violence and to the sense of his political inferiority; but even then, what has that to do with the merits of the plots and outrages of which I had been the object, and of which I had every right to be revenged." And he concluded that the real authors of the painful catastrophe, the persons who alone were responsible for it, were those who had favoured and excited from abroad the plots formed against the life of the First Consul. For, said he, either they had implicated the unfortunate prince in them, and had thus sealed his doom; or by neglecting to give him information of what was going forward, they had suffered him to slumber imprudently on the brink of the precipice, and to be so near the frontiers at the moment when so great a blow was going to be struck in the name and for the interest of his family.



“To us in the intimacy of private conversation the Emperor would say, that the blame in France might be ascribed to an excess of zeal in those who surrounded him, or to dark intrigues or private views; that he had been precipitately urged on in the affair; that they had as it were taken his mind unawares, and that his measures had been hastened, and their result anticipated. ‘I was one day alone,’ said he; ‘I recollect it well; I was taking my coffee, half-seated on the table on which I had just dined; when sudden information is brought me that a new conspiracy is discovered. I am warmly urged to put an end to these enormities; they represent to me that it is time at last to give a lesson to those who have been day by day conspiring against my life; that this end can only be attained by shedding the blood of one of them; and that the Duke d’Enghein, who might now be convicted of forming part of this new conspiracy, and taken in the very act, should be that one. It was added that he had been seen at Strasburg; that it was even believed that he had been in Paris, and that the plan was that he should enter France by the east at the moment of the explosion, while the Duke de Berri was disembarking in the west. I should tell you, observed the Emperor, that I did not even know precisely who the Duke d’Enghien was (the revolution having broken out when I was yet a very young man, and I never having been at court); and that I was quite in the dark as to where he was at that moment. Having been informed on those points, I exclaimed that if such was the case, the duke ought to be arrested, and that orders should be given to that effect. Everything had been foreseen and prepared: \* the different orders were already drawn up, nothing remained but to sign them, and the fate of the young prince was thus decided. He had been residing for some time past at a distance of about three leagues from the Rhine in the States of

\* This account differs a little from Savary’s, given above.

Baden. Had I been sooner aware of this fact, and of its importance, I should have taken umbrage at it, and should not have suffered the prince to remain so near the frontiers of France; and that circumstance, had it happened, would have saved his life. As for the assertions that were advanced at the time, that I had been strenuously opposed in this affair, and that numerous solicitations had been made to me, they are utterly false, and were only invented to make me appear in a more odious light. The same thing may be said of the various motives that have been ascribed to me; these motives may have existed in the bosoms of those who acted an inferior part on that occasion, and may have guided them in their private views; but my conduct was influenced only by the nature of the fact itself, and the energy of my disposition. Undoubtedly, if I had been informed in time of certain circumstances respecting the opinions of the prince and his disposition, if, above all, I had seen the letter which he wrote to me, and which, God knows for what reason, was only delivered to me after his death, I should certainly have forgiven him.' It was easy for us to perceive that these expressions of the Emperor were dictated by his heart and by natural feeling, and that they were only intended for us; for he would have felt himself much humbled, had he supposed that anybody could think for a moment that he endeavoured to shift the blame upon some other person; or that he condescended to justify himself. And this feeling was carried so far, that when he was speaking to strangers or dictating on that subject for the public eye, he confined himself to saying that if he had seen the prince's letter, he should perhaps have forgiven him on account of the great political advantages that he might have derived from so doing; and in tracing with his own hand his last thoughts which he concluded will be recorded in the present age and reach posterity, he still pronounces on the subject, which he is aware will be considered as the most delicate for his

memory, that if he were again placed in the same circumstances, he should again act in the same manner! Such was the man, such the stamp of his mind and the turn of his disposition.

“Napoleon one day said to me, with reference to the same subject, ‘If I occasioned a general consternation by that melancholy event, what an universal feeling of horror would have been produced by another spectacle with which I might have surprised the world! . . . . I have frequently been offered the lives of those whose place I filled on the throne, at the price of one million a head. They were seen to be my competitors, and it was supposed that I thirsted after their blood; but even if my disposition had been different from what it was, had I been formed to commit crimes, I should have repelled all thoughts of the crime thus proposed to me as seeming altogether gratuitous. I was then so powerful, so firmly seated; and they seemed so little to be feared! Revert to the periods of Tilsit and Wagram; to my marriage with Maria Louisa; to the state and attitude of Europe! However, in the midst of the crisis of the affairs of Georges and Pichegru, when I was assailed by murderers, the moment was thought favourable to tempt me, and the offer was renewed, having for its object the individual whom public opinion in England as well as in France pointed out as the chief mover of all these horrible conspiracies. I was at Boulogne where the bearer of these offers arrived: I took it into my head to ascertain personally the truth and the nature of the proposal. I ordered him to be brought before me—‘Well, sir!’ said I, when he appeared.—‘Yes, First Consul, we will give him up to you for one million.’—‘Sir, I will give you two millions; but on condition that you will bring him alive.’—‘Ah! that I could not promise,’ said the man, hesitating, and much disconcerted at the tone of my voice and the expression of my looks at that moment.—‘Do you, then, take me for a mere assassin? Know, sir, that though I may think it necessary to

inflict a punishment or make a great example, I am not disposed to encourage the perfidy of an ambuscade :’ and I drove him from my presence. Indeed his mere presence was already too great a contamination.”—*Las Cases*, vol. iv. p. 277.

Such were the real sentiments and line of conduct held by one who has been accused of nourishing a thirst for the blood of this unfortunate race, from the time that one of them refused (in answer to a pretended proposal to that effect) to waive their hereditary claims upon the throne of France :—a contrary supposition is more likely that his life was aimed at from the moment he had declined, in answer to a formal application to that effect, to proclaim Louis XVIII. as king. Talleyrand is roundly accused by Buonaparte and others of having instigated the designs against the Bourbons, and particularly of having had a principal hand in the seizure of the Duke d’Enghien and the holding back of his letter to the First Consul, from a desire to embroil him fatally with that family, whose return Talleyrand dreaded. He was met by Savary the morning of the duke’s arrival earlier than usual going to inform Buonaparte of the circumstance; and again he stumbled upon him the same evening coming out of Murat’s door. Possibly it had been discovered while the prince was detained in his carriage at the barrier that he was not Georges’ visitor; and the trial had been hurried forward to prevent the chance of Buonaparte’s relenting, when this particular should become known. Talleyrand is at present desirous of having the matter hushed up, or of exonerating himself by casting a double odium on others. He need not be alarmed. He would sooner be forgiven for having been accessory to the death of twenty Bourbons than for having spared the life of one of them when in his power. He never made royalty look little by great actions or elevated views; and that is the only crime which courts never pass over!

Buonaparte has himself chalked out the best line of conduct for him on this occasion, and which would

have left no rubs or flaws in the work. "If I had acted right," he has been heard to say, "I should have followed the example of Cromwell, who on the discovery of the first attempt made to assassinate him, the plot of which had been hatched in France, caused it to be signified to the French king, that if the like occurred again, he, by way of reprisal, would order assassins to be hired to murder him and a Stuart. Now I ought to have publicly signified that on the next attempt at assassination, I would cause the same to be made upon the Bourbon princes, to accomplish which last indeed I had only to say that I would not punish the projectors." This bluff, downright, plain-spoken Rowland for an Oliver of old Noll's was after all the best and safest footing to put the question upon, free from all affectation of legal forms or diplomatic *finesse*, which in such circumstances give either a false bias or prove impediments in the course of even-handed justice.

END OF VOL. II.

**LONDON :**  
**SIVILL AND EDWARDS, PRINTERS, CHANDOS-STREET,**  
**COVENT-GARDEN.**



















